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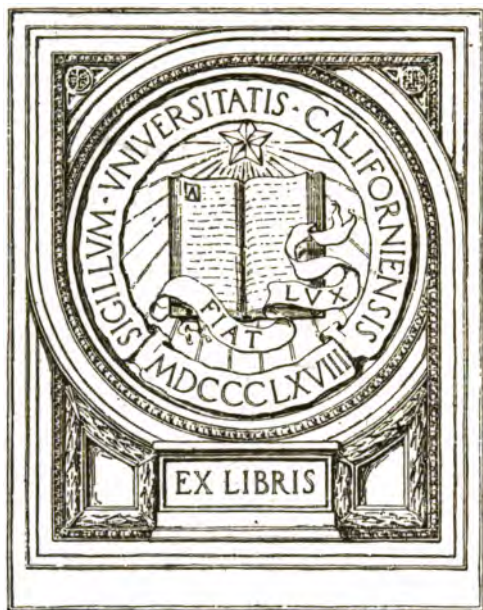
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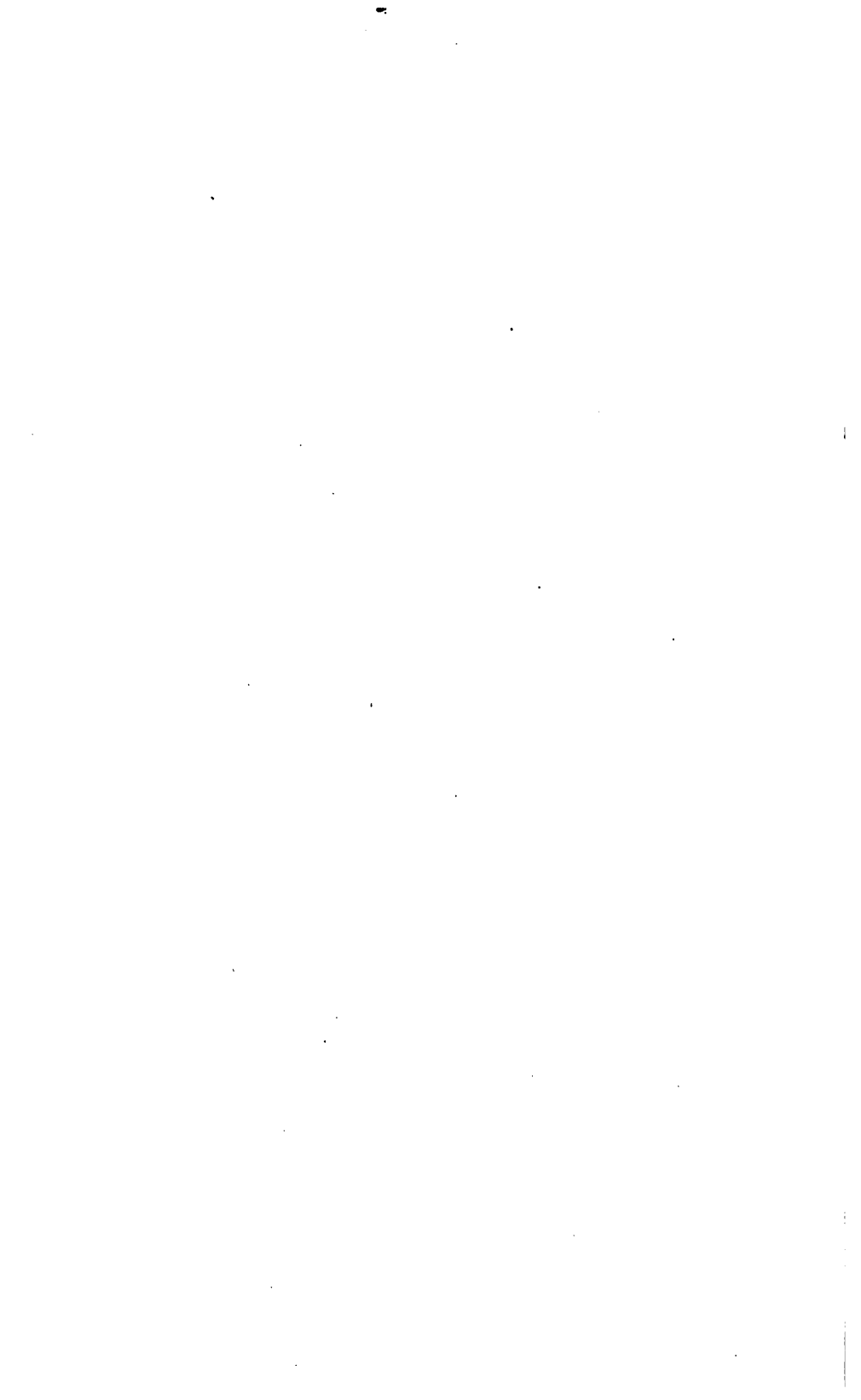
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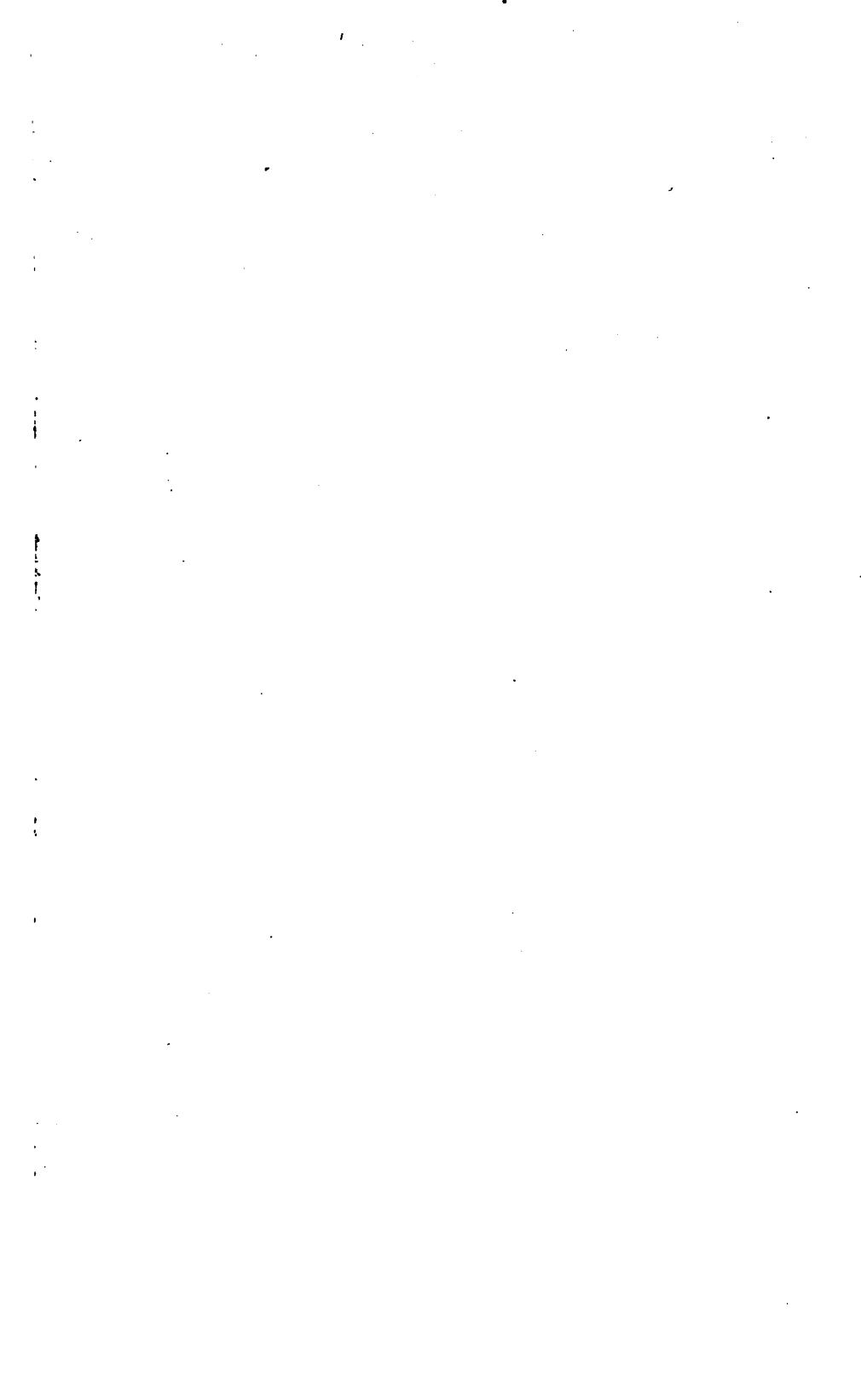
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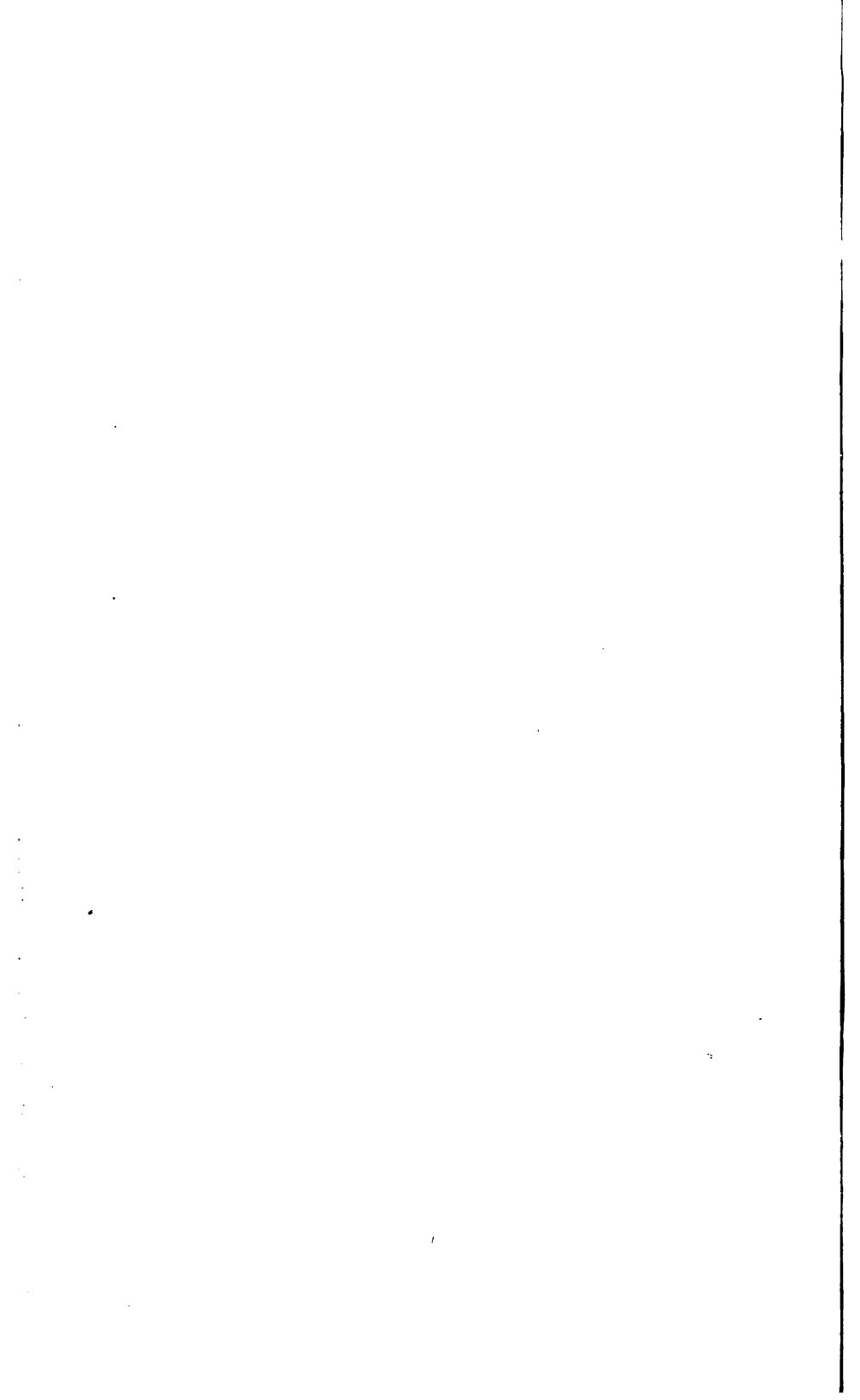


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DR. NEWTON'S COLUMNS

ON

THE POSITION

OF THE

Old School Presbyterian Assembly

ON THE

SUBJECT OF SLAVERY.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN CONSECUTIVE NUMBERS IN THE

"EAGLE OF THE SOUTH," JACKSON, MISS.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AND THE TERMS OF UNION PROPOSED BY THE  
UNITED SYNOD, AND THE OLD SCHOOL DELIVERANCE IN REPLY.

OLD SCHOOL  
PRESBYTERIAN  
ASSEMBLY

JACKSON, MISS.: PURDOM & BROTHER.

1859,



4/2/19

HIT  
PLAT

History Section

NO. 100  
RECEIVED

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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THE following numbers were written with the conviction that it was due to the Public, especially in the Southern States, to bring out the entire position of the Old School Presbyterian Church on the subject of Slavery. This was considered important from the fact, that her General Assemblies have been in the habit of uttering testimonies on the subject from time to time, for many years. Positions are assumed in them, for which authority will not be found in any part of the Holy Scriptures. Her deliverances are not in accordance with the teachings of Christ and his Apostles. They are inconsistent and contradictory. Sent forth to the world at intervals during sixty years, they are not readily accessible to the people. There is therefore a general want of information as to what they teach. And yet they are claimed as *the doctrine* of the Church on the subject of Slavery.

The writer of the pages which follow, has taken pains to collect these opinions and deliverances. He has examined them carefully;—has compared them one with another;—has studied them deliberately;—has viewed them in the light in which they are viewed by the leading publications, and the master minds in the denomination that claims them as her own, and has endeavored to determine unmistakably their meaning as intended by their framers, and interpreted by those who have studied them, and whose influence is most largely felt throughout that body.

Intended originally merely as newspaper articles, and written at intervals, sometimes of several weeks, frequent repetitions designedly occur in these columns, which would have been avoided in a continuous argument. Their publication in a form for preservation was called for. They had already been extensively read in the papers into which they had been copied: so, the Author sends them forth as originally written—without any alteration. They speak for themselves.

EDITOR OF FIRST EDITION.

## ERRATA.

On page 82: "Well, suppose I am a New School man, does that effect the position," &c. For "effect," read "affect."

Page 83, the following note should be inserted:

\* The stately Editors saw proper to decline my offer. In what terms, my readers may be a little curious to see. The following is a copy of their letter to me:

OFFICE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN, PHILADELPHIA, *April 13th*, 1859.

REV. A. NEWTON, JACKSON, MISS.

DEAR SIR:—Your letter with the Certificate of Deposit has been received. In reply, we have to say, that we judge of matter to be inserted in our columns, wholly by its merits, and no pecuniary offer could induce us to depart from this principle.

As we did not think your communications worthy of insertion, of course we could not be hired to publish them by the offer of one hundred dollars. We therefore herewith return the Certificate of Deposit.

Yours, &c.,

EDITORS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN.

On page 95: for "confriar," read "confrier."

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## DR. NEWTON'S COLUMNS

On the Position of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the Subject of Slavery. With an Appendix, containing the Declaration of Principles and the Terms of Union proposed by the United Synod, and the Old School Deliverance in reply.

This pamphlet will be forwarded to any who may wish to examine it, or who want copies for distribution, on the following terms, being the cost price of issuing it.

A single copy will be sent to any part of the United States, postage paid, on the receipt of ten postage stamps, (30 cents). They will be sent at \$3 00 per dozen, or \$20 00 per hundred copies. Address,

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & Co., *Philada., Pa.*  
PURDOM & BRO., *Jackson, Miss.*

The following letter, written more than a month since, having been received and retained with silent disregard by the editor of the *True Witness*, seeks the public eye through this medium. Having secured the use of an occasional column in the *Eagle of the South*, I shall probably have something to say soon.

A. NEWTON.

JACKSON, MISS., Sept. 24, 1858.

## THE BATTERY OPENED.

EXACT POSITION OF THE OLD SCHOOL ON THE SLAVERY QUESTION.

Fret not thyself because of evil doers ;  
Why shouldst thou die before thy time ?—*Bible*.

OR,

Heat not a furnace for thy foe so hot,  
That it doth singe thyself.—*Shakespeare's Version*.

*Editor of the "True Witness :"*

You seem to have been *powerfully exercised* on the receipt of a letter from your correspondent in Mississippi, requesting you to "examine the past deliverances of the Old School General Assembly on the subject of Slavery," and to "tell to the world her exact position in relation to this matter?" Instead of complying with the very natural and reasonable request of your "respected correspondent," you proceed, in your issue of the 14th inst., forthwith to *open a battery*, which, you say, is *designed* to "silence an intriguing divine belonging to the Southern wing of the New School body, which has recently seceded, who is striving to produce disaffection towards the Old School Assembly as an anti-slavery and abolition association."

In your sudden agitation, you have fallen into a "furious fret," and seem to have forgotten that the christian has an *armory*, to which he may go for the means of defence against any and every "troubler," whether in Israel, or from the far-off Gentiles. And you have betaken yourself to the construction of a battery of *car-nal weapons*, such as the following: *Trick, prejudices of the South, calumny, virulence, troubler in Israel, Mississippi calumniator, intriguing divine, poisonous reptile, thrusting fangs, &c.*

I know not who is thus *battered* as an "intriguing divine" and a "Mississippi calumniator;" and I, perhaps, have no right to complain of the style of warfare adopted, or of the character of the weapons used. But as a member of the Mississippi Synod, (N. S.) in connection with the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church, South, I beg leave to *complain* of this sweeping strike at every minister in our Synod. In withholding the *name* of the divine against whom your battery is *designedly* directed, you really subject us all to the suspicion of your readers. Justice, as well as charity, demands a different course.

If, as you say, the position of the Old School Assembly of the Presbyterian Church on the subject of slavery is as "clearly defined and perfectly understood" as that of any other "body on earth," why should you fly into a passion and turn inside out on the bare suggestion of a correspondent that you should *clearly* state that position and *tell it to the world*? Your correspondent, I presume, is a mem-

ber of your own church, and a reader of your paper. Will he be satisfied as to "the exact position" of the Old School General Assembly on the subject of slavery, when you shall have silenced, by means of a battery of hard names, an "intriguing divine belonging to the Southern wing of the New School body?"

If, as you say, "the whole world already abundantly knows the exact position of the Old School Assembly on the subject of slavery," you might have shown your pity for the weakness of your "respected correspondent," or yielded for once to, what you are pleased to call, "the prejudices of the South," by giving the information to him and to "the rest of mankind." You would thus have saved the expense of your long and (I suppose it was) unpleasant journey to Sodom for this battery of hard names. Had you "respected" the wishes of your correspondent, you might also have "respected" yourself, and followed your own advice in reference to the "Mississippi calumniator, and the intriguing divine," and the *little sister church* "of the Southern wing" might have been, as you suggest, "let severely alone."

I know not what may have been the utterances of "this troubler in Israel," whom you so fiercely denounce as a "*calumniator*." But if he has said that the position of the Old School Assembly on the subject of slavery is *not* exact—or that its past deliverances *are* equivocal—or that its position on this subject is semi-abolition, neither sound, nor safe, nor trustworthy—or that its position is *not* already abundantly known to all the world,—or that "the question of the black race and their relation of servitude was [*not*] settled by the church seventy years since," but that it is still an open question, yet *to be* settled by said Assembly—then I do know, and can show, that in making these statements, either one or all of them, this "troubler in Israel" has uttered no calumny. He is no trickster, no calumniator, no intriguer, no poisonous reptile. He has uttered the truth; and if I were called upon to defend him against the charge of slander, I should acknowledge the utterances charged, plead justification, and appeal to "the documents in proof."

Mr. Editor, you are aware that we do not see ourselves as others see us. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Suppose you grant me a column in your paper for the purpose of showing how "the rest of mankind" view "the exact position of the Old School Assembly on the subject of slavery." Wouldn't you like to see how it strikes a stranger? Just *one* column—no more. I shall not *trouble* the strange and unaccountable mistake of the last paragraph of your editorial as to "the trick of the schism of twenty years ago;" nor show how *very odd* it is, that there is now lying open before me the American Presbyterian, a Northern New School Anti-slavery paper "published [in] Philadelphia," which adopts the identical method which you so felicitously press into your service for the solution of contradictory accusations! Indeed, I promise you, I shall resist the temptation to point out the weaknesses and fallacies of your editorial generally; and shall confine myself strictly to a search for "the exact position of the Old School Assembly on the subject of slavery." If I find it—well; if not—no matter. "The whole world already abundantly knows" it. Do not fret, Mr. Editor, but keep cool, and be calm, like a *true witness*. I shall not *trouble* you for the loan of your *battery*. Truth and conscious right have no use for such weapons.

"Non tibi auxilio, nec defensoribus istis  
Tempus eget."

A. NEWTON.

JACKSON, MISS., Aug. 20, 1858.

# OLD SCHOOL PRESBYTERIAN ASSEMBLY ON SLAVERY.

## WHAT IS THEIR PRESENT POSITION?

THIS must be ascertained from their "acts, deliverances, and testimonies" on this subject, as they are found recorded in their own published MINUTES.

PROP.: The Old School General Assembly claim that their *faith* on the subject of Slavery is *constant and unalterable*—that their *testimony* in relation to Slavery has been *uniform*—and that, during a period of sixty or seventy years, they have *held and uttered substantially the same sentiments*.

PROOF: In the "deliverance," drawn up by Dr. Breckenridge, in reply to the proposition for union from the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church, South, unanimously adopted and uttered by the General Assembly of 1858, in New Orleans, we find the following:

"The subjects upon which the whole New School body differed from us at the period of their separation from us, and the subject upon which the two very unequal portions of that body have recently separated from each other, are questions upon which, we, as a denomination, are at peace, and with regard to the whole of which we see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith of our church, or to enter into fruitless conferences."—See *Minutes of the Assembly of 1858*.

"The two very unequal portions of that body" are the New School, South, and the New School, North, which separated from each other in 1857; and the only subject upon which they differed and separated is the question in relation to Slavery. With regard to *this*, the Old School General Assembly say: They "see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith of [their] church."

FURTHER PROOF: The Assembly (Old School) of 1846 thus profess and claim:

"Our church has, from time to time, during a period of nearly sixty years, expressed its views on the subject of Slavery. During all this period, it has held and uttered substantially the same sentiments. Believing that this uniform testimony is true, and capable of vindication from the word of God, the Assembly is at the same time clearly of the opinion that it has already deliberately and solemnly spoken on this subject with sufficient fulness and clearness. Therefore,

"Resolved, That no further action upon this subject is at present needed."—See *Minutes of the Assembly of 1846*, page 206. *Baird's Digest*, page 814.

Now, what is the faith of the Old School Presbyterian Church, which, up to the time of the meeting of the General Assembly in New Orleans in May last, they say has been "constant and unalterable?" What are the "sentiments substantially the same" which they have uttered "from time to time during a period of nearly sixty years?" What is the "testimony" on the subject of Slavery,

which, "during all this period," the Old School General Assembly has delivered, and which, they profess and claim, has been *uniform* and true, and capable of vindication from the word of God? We can hope to ascertain "the exact position of the Old School Assembly on the subject of Slavery" to-day, only by looking to the record of their deliverances during the period named. This record, genuine and authentic, is contained in BAIRD'S DIGEST, "*a Collection of the Acts, Deliverances, and Testimonies of the Supreme Judicatory of the Presbyterian Church, from its origin in America to the present time;*" a volume of 850 pages, octavo, published by the PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION, Philadelphia, 1856.

Let us look at this record. The first *General Assembly* was held in 1788. The *Synod of New York and Philadelphia* was "the supreme judicatory" of the church before the Assembly was formed. This *Synod*, in 1787, made a *deliverance* on Slavery, which the compiler of the Digest designates as the "first action on the subject." The record of this *action* is as follows :

"The Synod of New York and Philadelphia do highly approve of the general principles in favor of universal liberty that prevail in America, and the interest which many of the States have taken in promoting the abolition of Slavery ; yet, inasmuch as men introduced from a servile state to a participation of all the privileges of civil society, without a proper education, and without previous habits of industry, may be, in many respects, dangerous to the community, therefore they earnestly recommend it to all the members belonging to their communion to give those persons who are at present held in servitude, such good education as to prepare them for the better enjoyment of freedom ; and they moreover recommend that masters, wherever they find servants disposed to make a just improvement of the privilege, would give them a *peculium*, or grant them sufficient time and sufficient means of procuring their own liberty at a moderate rate, that thereby they may be brought into society with those habits of industry that may render them useful citizens ; and, finally, they recommend it to all their people to use the most prudent measures, consistent with the interest and the state of civil society, in the counties where they live, to procure eventually the final abolition of slavery in America."—*Baird's Digest*, p. 807.

This is the *deliverance* to which Dr. Breckenridge alludes in his speech in the Assembly of 1858, (to which the editor of the *True Witness* gives his "high approval,") when he says, "the question of the black race and their relation of servitude was settled seventy years since." Settled ! How settled ?

In 1793, the above deliverance was reuttered by the General Assembly. See *Digest*, p. 807.

In 1795, "The General Assembly assure all the Churches under their care, that they view, with the deepest concern, any vestiges of slavery which may exist in our country, and refer the Churches to the records of the General Assembly, published at different times, but especially to an overture of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, published in 1787, and republished among the extracts from the Minutes of the General Assembly of 1793, on that head, with which they trust every conscientious person will be fully satisfied."—*Digest*, p. 807.

In 1815, "The General Assembly have repeatedly declared their cordial approbation of those principles of civil liberty which appear to be recognized by the Federal and State governments in these United States. They have expressed their regret that the slavery of the Africans, and of their descendants,

still continues in so many places, and even among those within the pale of the Church."—*Digest*, p. 808.

#### ACTION OF 1818.

"Expressing the opinion of the Assembly in general, as to Slavery," filling more than two entire pages of the *Digest*. I give the following extracts :

"We consider the voluntary enslaving of one portion of the human race by another, as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature ; as utterly inconsistent with the law of God, which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ."

"It is manifestly the duty of all christians who enjoy the light of the present day, when the inconsistency of slavery, both with the dictates of humanity and religion, has been demonstrated and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use their honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavors, to correct the errors of former times, and as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible throughout the world."

"We rejoice that the Church to which we belong commenced as early as any other in this country, the good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery, and that in the same work many of its members have ever since been, and now are, among the most active, vigorous, and efficient laborers. We do, indeed, tenderly sympathize with those portions of our Church and our country where the evil of slavery has been entailed upon them ; where a great, and the most virtuous part of the community abhor slavery, and wish its extermination as sincerely as any others—but where the number of slaves, their ignorance, and their vicious habits generally, render an immediate and universal emancipation inconsistent alike with the safety and happiness of the master and slave. With those who are thus circumstanced, we repeat that we tenderly sympathize. At the same time, we earnestly exhort them to continue, and if possible to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery."—See *Digest*, pp. 809, 810.

#### ACTION OF 1845.

In 1845, the Committee to whom the papers and memorials on the subject of slavery were submitted, say, in their report :

"The Church of Christ is a spiritual body, whose jurisdiction extends to the religious faith and moral conduct of her members. She cannot legislate, where Christ has not legislated, nor make terms of membership which He has not made. The question, therefore, which this Assembly is called to decide, is this : Do the Scriptures teach that the holding of slaves, without regard to circumstances, is a sin, the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the Church of Christ ? It is impossible to answer this question in the affirmative, without contradicting some of the plainest declarations of the word of God."

—"We feel constrained to say, that however desirable it may be to ameliorate the condition of the slaves in the Southern and Western States, or to remove slavery from our country, these objects, we are fully persuaded, can never be secured by ecclesiastical legislation."

The report is long. The above extracts are a fair specimen of its general tenor. It was adopted, with the two resolutions which it embodied, as follows :



**"Resolved, 1. That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was originally organized, and has since continued the bond of union in the Church, upon the conceded principle that the existence of domestic slavery, under the circumstances in which it is found in the southern portion of the country, is no bar to Christian communion."**

**"Resolved, 2. That the petitions that ask the Assembly to make the holding of slaves in itself, a matter of discipline, do virtually require this judicatory to dissolve itself, and abandon the organization, under which, by the Divine blessing, it has so long prospered. The tendency is evidently to separate the northern and southern portion of the Church; a result which every good citizen must deplore, as tending to the dissolution of the Union of our beloved country, and which every enlightened Christian will oppose as bringing about a ruinous and unnecessary schism between brethren who maintain a common faith."**

**"The yeas and nays being ordered, were recorded." (Yeas 168, Nays 13, Excused 4.)—Minutes, 1845, p. 16. Digest, p. 813.**

This action of 1845, having a *seeming* tendency southward, and having been claimed as a sort of triumph in this direction, the Synod of Cincinnati, five Presbyteries, and many ministers, ruling elders, and members of the church in the Northern States, thought that its language at least needed explanation, and petitioned the Assembly of 1846 to utter additional testimony, or to re-affirm or explain the testimony previously given. In accordance with this request, the Assembly of 1846 adopted a minute affirming the consistency of the action of 1845 with all their previous deliverances, as follows:

#### ACTION OF 1846.

**"Our Church has, from time to time, during a period of nearly sixty years, expressed its views on the subject of slavery. During all this period it has held and uttered substantially the same sentiments. Believing that this uniform testimony is true, and capable of vindication from the word of God, the Assembly is at the same time clearly of the opinion that it has already deliberately and solemnly spoken on this subject with sufficient fulness and clearness. Therefore,**

**"Resolved, That no further action upon this subject is at present needed." (Ayes 119, Nays 33.) See Minutes of Assembly, 1846, page 206. Baird's Digest, p. 814.**

This sweeping declaration, embracing a period of nearly sixty years, and re-uttering and endorsing all the abolitionism of "all this period"—from 1787 to 1845—as all uniform, consistent, and substantially the same, though sufficiently explicit and comprehensive to assure the most skeptical that the church had no idea of receding from her ancient "uniform, constant, and unalterable faith" on the subject of slavery, was, nevertheless, followed up by a special explanation and disclaimer as to the action of 1845, adopted unanimously, as follows:

**"The following resolution was offered by the Rev. R. M. White, and was adopted [without division]:**

**"Resolved, That in the judgment of this House, the action of the General Assembly of 1845 was not intended to deny or rescind the testimony often uttered by the General Assemblies previous to that date."—Minutes, 1846, p. 207. Baird's Digest, 814.**

1850.

[In 1850, the subject being again introduced by overtures from the Presbytery

of Beaver, and the Church of Rocky Spring, in the Presbytery of Chillicothe, the Committee of Bills and Overtures recommended that it be

"*Resolved*, That the previous and repeated declarations of the General Assembly upon the subject of American slavery, are such as to render any action upon the above overture and memorial unnecessary." The overture was laid on the table.—*Minutes*, 1850, p. 456, 481.—*Baird's Digest*, pp. 814.]

Reader, you have before you the documents and deliverances of the Old School Presbyterian General Assembly on the subject of Slavery. I will thank you to preserve this paper. We shall perhaps want to look at these documents again. I wish I had space to give every word the Assembly has ever uttered on the subject. This, however, is not so necessary, as their faith on the subject of slavery is "constant and unalterable," and their *uniform* testimony always *consistent*, and "the sentiments held and uttered" by them are always "substantially the same."

Now, what is the "exact position" of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery? What was their position in 1787, when they *recommended all their people to use measures to procure the final abolition of slavery in America*? What was it in 1793, and in 1795, when they repeated this recommendation? What was it in 1815? What was it in 1818, when they *exhorted* their people *to increase their exertions* "to effect a total abolition of slavery," declaring that slavery is *inconsistent* "both with the dictates of humanity and religion," and enjoining it upon all to "use their honest, earnest and unwearied endeavors to efface this blot on our holy religion," and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout the world?

What was their position when they passed what the editor of the *Presbyterian of the West* styles the "*buncombe*" deliverance of 1845, which deliverance, according to the editor of the *St. Louis Presbyterian*, (Dr. Rice,) "does not contradict the past condemnation of slavery, nor contain one expression that wears a pro-slavery appearance, or that will bear any such interpretation?" What was their position in 1846, when, with a reach of "nearly sixty years," they reiterated and emphasized the deliverances of past Assemblies "during all this period?"

What is their position in 1858, when they stand up before all the world, in the chief city of the South, and, without a blush, unanimously avow and publicly proclaim their approval of all their abolition deliverances, and fearlessly glorify themselves as a church whose faith on this subject is *constant and unalterable*, and whose past action they see *no occasion whatever to revise*.

Reader, what is the exact position of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery? Is it sound? Is it scriptural? Is it safe? Is it trustworthy? Is this an abolition Assembly? Say yourself—is it?

Read these documents, ye Presbyterians of the South. Are *you* using your "honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavors to obtain the complete abolition of slavery," as required by the highest judicatory of your church? Read, ye men of the South generally, and say if you are not convinced that this church has bought the *peace* on this subject, of which they boast, (but which they do not enjoy,) by surrendering the principles and rights of the South? Can it be possible that the Old School Presbyterians in the midst of us have been aware of "the exact position" of the General Assembly on this subject? It has been stoutly maintained that if there is a body on earth whose position on the subject of slavery is "clearly defined and perfectly understood," that body is the Old School Presbyterian General Assembly. I do not begin to believe any such thing. I am very far from cherishing the suspicion of my many friends and

acquaintances of that denomination which such a belief must necessarily engender. The thing is probably well enough *understood* in the North, and by a traitorous few among us. My purpose is to contribute my share in helping forward so *clear a definition* of the Assembly's "exact position" on this subject, that every Southern man may have a *perfect understanding* of it—so that he who reads must *run*, or renounce and denounce the *constant and unalterable faith*, and utterly repudiate the *uniform deliverances*, of such an Assembly.

## FACTS AND ARGUMENTS, PRINCIPLES AND COMPARISONS.

Having laid before the reader the "acts, testimonies and deliverances" of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery, I have expected him to *read*, examine and compare, and to elaborate his own conclusion; and have left it with him to say for himself what is their "exact position." I did not care to give it a name. When I have shown that a man has at midnight entered his neighbor's private chamber by means of a false key, opened his money-drawer, and abstracted therefrom a roll of bank notes, and appropriated them to his own personal use, I do not care to call him a *thief*. He names himself.

I have shown, from their own records, that the Old School General Assembly do hold and testify that slavery is a blot on our holy religion, is inconsistent with the dictates of humanity and religion; that the said Assembly do recommend it to all their people to use measures to procure the abolition of slavery—to obtain the complete abolition of slavery, and to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery. I do not care to call this an *abolition* Assembly. "Let them but be testimonied in their own bringings forth." "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

The common plea of "*fruit culpa temporum non eorum*," cannot avail in warding off this conclusion. For though the earlier deliverances should be referred to the fault of the times, and though they were what they are in accordance with the spirit and lights of that age, it must be remembered that the action of 1846 shuts up every avenue of escape upon such a plea as this. That action boasts that, *Our church has, during a period of nearly sixty years*, held and uttered substantially the same sentiments, and during all this period delivered a uniform testimony on the subject of slavery. And so lately as May last, and so near us as New Orleans, we find the great *conservative, national* Presbyterian Assembly of 1858, standing up, to a man, mid thick clouds of incense, that went up day and night from Southern altars, still "like-minded" and unanimous, seeing "no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith" of their church on this subject.

*But why do you thrust these matters upon the public attention just now, and thus attack, in the political journals, so large, so learned, so pious and so influential a body of christians, many of whom are your next-door neighbors, and have been born and nurtured in the Presbyterian church, and ought to know her principles as well as a stranger?*

Gentle reader, hold! and hear me for one moment. I am no stranger. I am of the pure American Presbyterian stock, unmixed with any foreign ingredient of the Scottish Hards, or Independent Softs. I was born and baptized in the church. My venerated father—honored and blest forever be the precious remembrance of his name!—lived and labored and died in the Presbyterian pulpit. Two of his six brothers, my uncles, did the same. The seven brothers, my father

being the youngest, my grandfather, and my maternal uncles, were all patriot soldiers of the Revolution, and Presbyterian soldiers of the Cross, in the times that tried men's souls.

I love the church of my fathers. I love the soundness of her doctrine, the purity and simplicity of her modes of worship, her inimitable constitution, and the admirable guards and guarantees of her discipline upon the privilege of private judgment and the rights and liberties of her members. I love the church, as she was in her original simplicity and purity, and as she is in her duly authorized standards. I know, and have studied well her history. Such acts and testimonies and deliverances as we have been considering, are unauthorized by her standards, and each and all of them a violation of her constitution. The Assembly has assumed and exercised, for the church, the functions of the state. There is not one word in the constitutional standards of the Presbyterian church, as there is not in the Bible, against slavery. And yet the Assembly has, for a period of seventy years, been acting, testifying and delivering against it. Over the acts of the earlier Assemblies the mantle of charity and forgetfulness may be thrown. They may be set down to the *fault of the times*. But for the later Assemblies, which seem ambitious of assuming the responsibility of reuttering and endorsing all the abolition deliverances of the past, there can be offered no satisfactory apology or excuse.

In giving these facts to the public, I have *attacked* nobody—much less have I *attacked* my neighbors and friends, whose Southern hearts, I trust, I know how to measure, and whose Southern hearts I would peril my life to defend.

There is a little band of Presbyterians, who, though few, are yet fearless and firm as the Spartan three hundred. This body, regularly organized as the "United Synod of the Presbyterian Church," in their *Declaration of Principles*, speak a language very different from that of the Old School General Assembly. They hold that "slavery is an institution of the state, its continuance or abolition depending entirely on the will of the state, irrespective of the views and decisions of church courts." Their distinctive principle is that all acts, testimonies and deliverances on the subject of slavery are *inappropriate to the functions of the Church of Christ* in general, and unauthorized by the constitution of the Presbyterian church in particular. Of this Presbyterian Synod I am an humble, though earnest member.

We have been *attacked*—fiercely and furiously *attacked*—and denounced as calumniators and troublers because, in justification of our own position, standing apart from the Old School Assembly, we have deemed *their* position unsatisfactory and unsafe, and have made it an indispensable condition of our union with them that they shall right themselves on the question of slavery.

I have referred *now* to these various positions and to the relations of parties of Presbyterians, to show that, while I am doing good service to the Old School Assembly and to the public by making them better acquainted, and putting them in a fair way to *understand* each other, I am really "enforced by the rough torrent of occasion" to defend myself.

On my own account, therefore, and in behalf of my brothers of the UNITED SYNOD,—noble men! holy men! earnest, honest and independent, frank, fearless and firm, active, practical, working men in the vineyard of the Lord! it is in my heart to live, to labor and to die with them and for them!—On my own account, and in behalf of these, my brothers, I have resolved that the Presbyterian laymen, other christians, and the Southern public, shall know from their own records, the

exact position of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery. These records have been withheld from this community. When published in part for several years past, *essential facts* of the record have been kept in the background as unsuited to the gaze of Southern eyes. The masses of the people, the members and officers of the church, nay, many ministers—I know not how many—have not known, have not dreamed, but have been taught to *deny*, that the position, “the constant and unalterable faith” of their church is such as they now have an opportunity of finding it to be.

I mean no offence; but I must say in all kindness, that the members of the church, the rank and file, the “Israelites indeed,” of the Old School Presbyterian church, whose hearts are true as steel to the South, and whose blood would flow freely in defence of southern rights and southern institutions, have had no opportunity of finding out these astounding facts. Say, friends, let me ask you, candidly, did you know, before you saw the record for yourself, as furnished in my column of the 13th inst., that “many of (your) members”—the most virtuous part—have been and now “are the most active, vigorous and efficient laborers” in the good work of putting an end to slavery? Did you know that your Assembly do now, at the present date, declare slavery to be “a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, a blot on our holy religion, totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ?” Did you know that ~~the~~ “It is manifestly the duty of all christians who enjoy the light of the present day, to use their honest, earnest and unwearied endeavors as speedily as possible to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout christendom, and, if possible, throughout the world?”

Let me ask you further, my Old School Presbyterian friends: Have you not been told, and did you not believe,—before you read the evidence to the contrary given in my article—that the testimony of the Assembly of 1818 was “the old position” of your church, now considered a dead letter and out of date? Have you not been told, and did you not believe, that the testimony of 1845 is “*the* testimony of (your) church on slavery, the first after 1818, and its testimonies from May, 1845, till now?”—and that “since that time, your Assembly has refused to take any further action?” Did you know that the Assembly of 1846 deliberately took upon its own shoulders the huge putrescent carcass of abolitionism, which, “during a period of nearly sixty years,” had grown and extended its enormous dimensions, *instar montis*, yet—unlike the image seen by the prophet—all “uniform and substantially the same?” Did you know that the Assembly of 1850 stooped patient and uncomplaining under the weight of this same monster?—and that now, in 1858, the church has *peace*, only because the question of slavery is *settled*—if settled it is—on the false and foul basis of abolition, at the expense of truth and righteousness? And that—as in 1846 “no further action was *at present* needed”—the Assembly of 1858, passing the neck of the South, eowardized and quiet, under the yoke, “see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith” of their church on the subject of slavery?

Under the circumstances, I surely cannot be charged with needlessly *thrusting* these matters upon the attention of the public. Ought not every one to know—and does not every one want to know—what is the position of *such* a church on *such* a subject?

*But you have brought this matter before the public in the political journals.*

The political journals! Well, what if I have? I had no other resource. Our

little church of the "Southern Wing" has no organ nearer than Knoxville, Tenn. Besides and especially, it must be noted that this is no religious or theological question. It is purely *political*, and is a question of vital concernment to every man, woman and child in the South.

Whatever may have been the promptings of my heart, therefore, in *thrusting* these matters, at this time, upon the reading public, the service rendered is not the less valuable. The *keeping* of the heart is my concern; and I trust I shall have grace to attend to it with all diligence and care. I have lived too long, and have seen and felt too clearly and keenly the emptiness and utter worthlessness of the windy words of a fitful and hollow-hearted crowd, and I am too near my final reckoning to spend my time in thrusting sacrifices before that idol of fools, and vanity of vanities—a *name in print*. "The man whose ruling principle is *duty*," it has been well said, "is never perplexed with anxious, corroding calculations of interest and popularity."

There is some philosophy in the quaint adage used among the ancients, "*Truth lies in a well*;" and some labor and patience are oftentimes needed in order that we may get at it—not the artesian well of modern times, whose waters are thrown up spontaneously from the bosom of the earth—but the old-fashioned well, with its old oaken bucket, by means of which the water must be drawn up by hard labor.

Many persons—I would beg their pardons in advance for what I am going to say, but I know they will never see these lines—many persons are quite too lazy, or bigoted, or *busy*, to give that time and attention to the consideration of subjects of this character, which are needed to enable them to take, and to hold, manly and independent views of the questions involved. It is humiliating to count the number of those who prefer to have their thinking done *abroad*, and who gladly embrace and thankfully adopt the opinions which others are ever ready to manufacture for them. Freely the one party gives, and freely the other party receives.

I cannot but flatter myself with the hope that my readers do not belong to this class. No; they will either consent to have, and to hold, and to express no opinion on this subject, or on any other,—or else they will give it such attention as shall enable them to form a judgment of their *own*, based upon the facts and evidences within their reach.

Would it be presuming too much upon the reader's interest in the subject, or imposing too heavy a task upon his patience, to ask him to read again my column in the *Weekly Eagle* of Oct. 13, pp. 8–11, containing the acts, testimonies and deliverances of the General Assembly? I fear I may disgust him with the whole inquiry by the suggestion. I must be permitted, however, to observe that this is the only sure method of arriving at a safe and satisfactory conclusion on the subject. If we would know "the exact position" of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery, we must *read* the record of their acts, testimonies and deliverances on that subject. We must compare, consider and judge for ourselves.

I claim to be believed, when I assure the reader that I have no desire to supervise or control his convictions or his conduct in reference to this question. I am willing, if I can—nay, I earnestly desire to collate, arrange and present the facts for his easier apprehension and appreciation of them. I would put the means within his reach, and at his command, whereby, in the free and judicious exercise of the powers and privileges with which God has endowed him, he may think, reason, decide and *act* for himself.

I have no private, personal or selfish ends to accomplish—no insatiable sectarian

appetite to feed; no driving spirit of intolerance, no bigoted or vain personal ambition to gratify. I have no sect to serve, or to fear; no man or party, in Church or State, to bow to, or swear by; no exclusive, proscriptive human dogmas to defend or die by; no church whose arrogant pretensions must be maintained, and her ministers and members mutually hoodwinked, in order that they may unite in one grand chorus of praise to themselves as the great *like-minded, homogeneous national organization*.

I trust I am not altogether unmindful of the tremendous responsibility which he must assume, and I am sure I am by no means free from apprehension as to the odium and opposition which, from certain quarters, he must encounter, who would lift the cover from off the acts, testimonies and deliverances of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly, and lay them bare before the gaze of a wide-awake and sensitive Southern public. I have fully anticipated, and have endeavored to measure the men and the means that will be mustered against me. I have, again and again, when looking at the long line of waving plumes and glittering epaulets, shrunk momentarily from the prospect of so unequal and so fearful a contest. Cherishing a strong faith in the power and prevalence, and final triumph of truth and the right, I have been stimulated and sustained in my purpose, only by the confidence that I have in the rank and file, and the reflection that officers can only do battle so long as they have men at their command, to do their bidding. Leaders are not leaders when there are none to be led by them.

The men of the Old School Presbyterian Church in the Southern States surely have nothing to gain, but everything to lose, by shutting their eyes upon the exact position of their General Assembly. I know it may be said, and will be said—indeed it has been said—that the act or testimony of the General Assembly is but an expression of *their* opinion; and as such, it does not affect us, or our relations to the Church—why should we make trouble in the Church, so long as we are allowed to entertain our own views, and to hold our places in the Church, as well as our slaves, if we think proper?

The action of the General Assembly does not affect you? Read the acts of the Assembly on the subject of slavery, and see if you can be comfortable and stand still in the false position in which you find yourself placed—Remember, this is your Assembly, the highest indicatory of *your* Church. Their act is *your* act. Their testimony is *your* testimony. *Your* representative voted and acted and testified, and delivered for *you*, and in *your* behalf. I know of no protest by Southern members of the Assembly against any of the acts, testimonies or deliverances on the subject of slavery. The action of all actions, that of 1846, “solemnly and deliberately,” joining in the testimony of all previous Assemblies “during a period of nearly sixty years,” pronouncing it “uniform, and true, and capable of vindication from the word of God,” was adopted by a vote of 119, against 33. Every member from the South voted for it! The vote of 1868 was unanimous—the members of that Assembly being all “*like-minded*.”

These late Assemblies do not only approve and endorse the notable action of 1818—*your* representatives voting with the majority—or acquiescing without protest; but they “deliberately and solemnly,” commend the odious sentiments and testimony of 1818 and all preceding Assemblies, and vouch the same as “true, and capable of vindication from the word of God.” Thus they say,—and *your* representatives say—and *you* are made to say—that slavery is “a blot on our holy religion, a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, utterly inconsistent with the law of God, the dictates of humanity and

religion, totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ"—and that it is manifestly the duty of all christians to use their honest, earnest and unwearied endeavours, as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete *abolition* of slavery throughout christendom, and if possible, throughout the world."

Southern old school Presbyterians, are these your sentiments? Is this your testimony?—And do you "deliberately and solemnly" bear witness that this testimony is "true and capable of vindication from the word of God?"

What should we think of *our* Representatives in Congress, if they should vote for such a batch of unwholesome words and corrupt abolition railings as this? What should we think of them, if on the passage of such a *deliverance*, they should fold their hands, close their lips and sit tamely by, without one solitary word of stern and solemn protest? And what should we think of *ourselves* if, on the return of such servants, we should silently sit and submit to be thus unrepresented and betrayed, or in our amazing infatuations, say, well done good and faithful servants?!

But this is not all. Though bad enough in all conscience, still it is not by any means the worst. You who hold slaves are especially referred to and vouched for as maintaining and supporting these sentiments "as sincerely as any other." Hold on a moment until you read the following, and if your ears do not tingle, your blood boil, and your righteous indignation burn, I shall confess that I have totally misunderstood you.

"We do indeed tenderly sympathise with those portions of our church and our country where the evil of slavery has been entailed upon them; where a great, and the *most virtuous* part of the community *abhor* slavery, and wish its extermination as sincerely as any others. At the same time we earnestly exhort them to *continue*, and if possible, to *INCREASE* their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery."

Are these *your sentiments* "deliberately and solemnly spoken," through your commissioners? And do you tenderly sympathise with those portions of the church described, and under the circumstances named? Do *you* "earnestly exhort them to continue, and if possible to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery?"

Or—Are *you* of "the most virtuous part of the community," and as such do *you* "abhor slavery, and wish its extermination as sincerely as any others?" Are you duly grateful for the sympathy so kindly tendered amid your sore trials and severe afflictions, and arduous *labors*? Have *you* been heretofore *laboring* "in the good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery?" And like faithful laborers, good men and true, do you accept and obey the *earnest exhortation* "to continue and if possible to increase (your) exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery?"

If not—and you surely are not, and do not, and have not—your *position* is by no means to be coveted or envied. Is not this a case of injury and insult combined? You have not only been misrepresented; but entrapped and betrayed into a deliberate and solemn avouchment of the *abolitioners*. Are you content to be *sold* with the body and soul of your most cherished principles and institutions—appurtenances, hereditaments, and all?

After all—some good hearted *soft-skull* may say—the action of 1845 secures us from interference, by *deciding* that slavery is "no bar to christian communion."



What if it does *decide* that the "blot on our holy religion" shall be no blot on our Presbyterianism?—That gives you no relief from the dilemma in which you are placed. Are you willing to confess that you retain your membership in the church by mere sufferance, as a sort of charity? Are you content to hold a place in the church whose highest judicatory declares and denounces your social organization and the institutions of your household a "blot on our holy religion," and your daily walk and conversation amid the relations of your family "utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ?" Will you say you care not for the blot, so long as there is *no bar*?

We must not be deceived by the delphic and delusory deliverance of 1845. "The act of 1845," says DR. MONFORT, the *Editor of the Presbyterian of the West*, "was not intended either to condemn or approve slavery, though it very nearly does both." Besides the extracts already given from the report accompanying the resolutions of that year, it contains the following sort of *fling* upon *abolitionism*:

"This Assembly cannot denounce the holding of slaves as necessarily a heinous and scandalous sin calculated to bring upon the Church the curse of God, without charging the Apostles of Christ with conniving at sin, introducing into the Church such sinners, and thus bringing on them the curse of the Almighty. In so saying, however, the Assembly are not to be understood as denying that there is evil connected with slavery. Much less do they approve of those defective and oppressive laws by which, in some of the States, it is regulated. We feel constrained further to say, that however desirable it may be to ameliorate the condition of the slaves in the Southern and Western States, or to remove slavery from our country, these objects we are fully persuaded can never be secured by ecclesiastical legislation. Much less can they be attained by those indiscriminate denunciations against slave-holders without regard to their character or circumstances which have to so great an extent characterized the movements of modern Abolitionists, which so far from removing the evils complained of, tend only to perpetuate and aggravate them."

This paper was certainly got up with great skill. DR. RICE, a Southern commissioner, claims to be "the individual honored by the Assembly of 1845, as chairman of the committee on this important subject." He doubtless drew up the report, and framed the resolutions, and may therefore be presumed to be a safe expositor. He, DR. RICE, says:

"There is not one expression in the paper adopted in 1845 that wears a proslavery appearance, or that will bear any such interpretation. There is absolutely no ambiguity in the language of the document in question. There is no part of it liable to be misunderstood. The Assembly did not even decide that under any circumstances it is entirely right to hold slaves, but only that it is not a matter of discipline."


And of the odious deliverance of 1818, "the individual honored by the Assembly of 1845 as the Chairman of their committee on this important subject," says:

"No subsequent action of any Assembly has repealed that of 1818—for ourselves, we are free to say that we cordially approve of the entire document as it has always been understood by the Church."

And as to "this important subject," generally, this same "individual" the honored Chairman of the Assembly's Committee of 1845, the Rev. N. L. Rice, D. D., who drew up the report and resolutions,—says, eleven years afterwards,

"As for ourself, we have never concealed our conviction that slavery is an evil of immense magnitude." (*See Dr. Rice's Editorials in the St. Louis Presbyterian, during the years 1856 and 1857.*)

The aid and comfort afforded to the South from this *blot and no bar* deliverance of 1845 must be very feeble and cold. No wonder DR. MONFORT says it "was not intended either to condemn or approve slavery, though it very nearly does both!" It seems to be a sort of political *Janus* with his face, like the Geographer, to the North; but with the Astronomer, *looking* towards the South. A queer thing is this same deliverance of the General Assembly of 1845. I must give it a regular *over-hauling*, some of these days.

For the present, it must be remembered that whatever interpretation may be put on the action of 1845, and whatever may have been its design, it "was not intended to "deny or rescind the testimony often uttered by the General Assemblies previous to that date."—The Assembly of 1846, looking back on the action of 1845, and 1818, and still farther, even through "a period of nearly sixty years," deliberately and solemnly pronounce the testimony and entire mass of views and sentiments of all these Assemblies *uniform and substantially the same*, and all  "true, and capable of vindication from the word of God." They see no need of further action—They are content with the *blot and no bar*.—In 1850, the Assembly found all right—No change required. And so every Assembly since, by silence and inaction, say the same thing—utter "substantially the same sentiments." Until in 1858, having *settled* down on the basis of a *blot but no bar*—and the North being content to stop, and report progress for "the present," and to bide their time for "further action"—the Assembly, all *like-minded stereobased and at peace*," see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith of (their) Church!"

## FACTS, PRINCIPLES AND ARGUMENTS.

"You go not till I set you up a glass  
Where you may see the inmost part of you."

In attempting to ascertain and define the exact position of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery, and in the discussions of the grave questions connected with it, I desire neither to be misunderstood nor misrepresented. I therefore use plainness of speech. And while I shall nothing extenuate, I hope I shall not be tempted to set down aught in malice. "We are not of the night, nor of darkness;" and I hope to be excused when I adopt the language of the prophet, and say "to them that are in darkness, *show yourselves!*"

To hesitate and halt, or to obscure and *cover up*, on such a question as this, and at such a time as this, is treason to the truth and treason to the South. I am resolved there shall be found at least one man who will not be deterred by the frowns, or threats, or groans, the false cry of peace and charity, or the solemn looks and sad countenances of disfigured faces,—from exposing and denouncing the false testimonies, unscriptural sentiments, and abolition deliverances of this like-minded, constant and unalterable Assembly, and their unprincipled and shameful surrender of truth and righteousness, as well as the interests of the South, to the *horse-leech* demands of fanaticism, fury and folly at the North. Charity, indeed, suffereth long and is kind. But charity is neither deaf nor blind. She

rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the *truth*. Charity may not lie sleeping and dreaming of security and safety, when the incendiary's torch has already lighted up her dwelling. Everybody ought to know, and everybody *shall* know—or have an opportunity of knowing—from their own authentic records, the acts, testimonies and deliverances of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery. *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum.*




I have said, I love the Presbyterian Church. I love her Confession of Faith, but I do not approve the Old School interpretation of it. I admire her Constitution, Form of Government and Discipline; but I do not admire the Old School *Administration*. In short, I love Presbyterianism; but I hate Old-Schoolism.


The administrative policy of the Old School is all wrong. They have signally and shamefully disregarded the sacredness of written constitutional law. Their notable *Reform Measures* of 1837 furnish an example of injustice and oppression exercised by a mere majority power in spite of the guards, checks and guaranties of their own Constitution, for which there can rarely be found a parallel in the history of deliberative bodies, either civil or ecclesiastic, for the last three hundred years. To accomplish an end, which they seemed determined to reach by any sort of means, with their eyes open in the broad face of day, they utterly ignored and trampled in the dust the express provisions of their own Constitution which they had solemnly vowed to maintain and support. This strange and unparalleled outrage perpetrated upon five hundred ministers and sixty thousand members, resulted in the distinctions and denominations of *New* and *Old School*. An Assembly, whose file-leaders of that day are still in the field, and whose well-known voices are still heard, fierce, fiery and furious, at the head of their columns, and who, in place of giving signs of repentance and reformation, boast of their agency in that unhallowed work, and glory in the shame of that unholy war, may well bear watching by Southern sentinels, when Southern rights and Southern institutions, and the safety and security and perpetuity of Southern social life, are in any degree trusted to their guardianship.

The grand error of the Old School Administration in regard to the subject of slavery is *jurisdictional*. They have transcended the limits of their authority. They have shown unmistakable symptoms of uneasiness and dissatisfaction at standing *down* on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ and his apostles; and have at various times betrayed signs of a readiness to occupy another and a different basis on this subject. Our Saviour and his apostles shook hands with the master and his slave, mingled with them in their daily walks, preached the gospel to them in their public ministrations, inculcated and enforced the duties of both, without a word, a scowl, or the slightest expression of displeasure or discontent with either. They recognized and thus acknowledged the relation of master and slave, as a positive institution of Revelation, of divine appointment and ordained of God. But these *testimonitors* seem to be too *wise* to be guided by Infinite Wisdom and too *pure* to be satisfied with Infinite Purity itself. Nay, they would govern themselves, and the church, and the State, and the world, by a *law* which is *higher* than the MOST HIGH. They would call that common or unclean, and a *blot*, which God has cleansed. Of that, which God himself does not disdain to touch, and handle and regulate—these *holier men* would say, Touch not, taste not, handle not; it is “a blot on our holy religion, a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ.” Thus “the name of Christ and his doctrine is blasphemed,” the wisdom of the

great Head of the Church is impeached, and the example and "wholesome words" of his apostles are contemned and set at naught; our social and domestic relations are invaded, and the civil and political institutions of the State undermined, betrayed and endangered.

These are not merely the acts and deliverances of a past age, the testimony of men of other times, the enactments of the earlier Assemblies to be found upon the statute book among the musty records of ancient times, now and long since forgotten, or regarded as obsolete, out of date, out of use, and of no force. As such—though on a subject like this, we could hardly excuse the Assembly for so strange a neglect to *revise* their code, repudiate these unchristian and anti-scriptural acts, contradict and disavow these false testimonies, wash out this foul blot, give us a clean record, and a deliverance such as is demanded in justice to truth and in accordance with the spirit and philosophy of the times—we might, nevertheless, have deemed it scarcely worth while to soil our hands or blot our pages with extracts from these foul papers.

But no—These are the claims, assumptions and powers set up and exercised by the Assemblies of our own times. For it must not be forgotten, in all our investigations of this subject, that the acts, testimonies and deliverances of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly in relation to slavery "during a period of nearly sixty years," each and all of them, have been "deliberately and solemnly spoken"—that during all this period,  "the church has held and uttered substantially the same sentiments" and *to-day* avouches and commends this uniform testimony as  "true and capable of vindication from the word of God." Up to this present writing, in the year of our Lord, eighteen hundred and fifty-eight, the Old School Presbyterian Church has neither denied, nor rescinded, repudiated nor abated; but has endorsed, intensified and emphasized the acts, testimonies and deliverances of all preceding Assemblies on the subject of slavery, claiming them all as "deliberately and solemnly spoken," and pronouncing them  "true and capable of vindication from the word of God."

Nay—So far have the Assembly ever been from repudiating or denying any former testimonies or deliverances, appertaining to the subject of slavery, they have done precisely the opposite thing. When they were *delivered* of the *no bar* decision of 1845, many supposed, naturally enough, that if slavery was *no bar*, it could be *no blot*; and as the Assembly of 1845 had decided that slavery was *no bar* to christian communion, it was supposed they intended to decide that it is *no blot* on our holy religion—and so to *deny* the testimony of 1818. This interpretation of the *no bar* action of 1845 was promptly disowned. The very next year, they deliberately and solemnly DENIED *denying* any such thing.  The Assembly of 1846—South and North being *likeminded*,--unanimously

*Resolved*, That in the judgment of this House, the action of the General Assembly of 1845, was not intended to deny or rescind the testimony often uttered by the General Assemblies previous to that date. See *Minutes of 1846*, p. 207. *Baird's Digest*, p. 814.

I have heretofore, and now, made this point so clear that he who reads, and does not see it, *will* not see it. And it does really seem to me that the man who, with these lights before him, would skulk behind the idle pretence that *these old documents are all dead and done away with* and say, *these are not the views of the church now-a-days*, is like those "evil men and seducers" spoken of

in Scripture, who "wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," and would sell the truth, which is the birth right of all men, for a mess of pottage.

Whatever views in relation to slavery the Old School Presbyterian Church has once or at any time expressed, the church expresses "substantially the same sentiments now." Their faith on this subject is "constant and unalterable." Their testimony is uniform, and to the present hour all claimed and avouched as "true and capable of vindication from the word of God." There is no revised code among Old School Presbyterians. The reader has their slavery code before him. What more could an abolitionist ask? Looking back upon the huge and hideous pile of abolition deliverances, the Assembly of 1858 "see no occasion to revise," alter or amend.

Will not the people of the South look out for the "further action" of such a body as this? Is it not in vain to hope for any abatement of the fires of fanaticism at the North, when they are fed and supported by such material as this? The Abolitionists claim and count their thousands at the South who at heart sympathize with them, and "abhor slavery as sincerely as any others."

The Old School Presbyterians tamely concede the claim, and join with them in the imputations against themselves. Is it any wonder that political abolitionism finds aid and comfort, is encouraged and strengthened and confirmed in its wicked purposes, and confidently expects, when the crisis comes, to find *sincere* friends and faithful fellow *laborers* in the good work of putting an end to slavery, when so large and influential a church with so large a membership in the South, are all *likeminded*, hold and utter substantially the same sentiments and bear a uniform testimony against slavery as a "blot on our holy religion, a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ?" Can we hope that the wicked will ever cease from troubling, or the weary be at rest, so long as "*that wicked*" finds so large and influential a body of sympathizers and friends, all *likeminded* and *constant* and *uniform* in "deliberately and solemnly" declaring that "It is the manifest duty of all christians to use their honest, earnest and unwearied endeavors as speedily as possible to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible throughout the world?"

The Old School Presbyterian Church has done, and is this day doing, more to encourage and keep alive the spirit of abolitionism at the North than any church or body of men in the United States. And whenever, if ever, the Old School Presbyterians in the Southern States shall abandon their present position of falsehood, fallacy and folly, and like *men* and christians right themselves on this subject, all abolitiondom will tremble. Will the Old School Presbyterians of the South do so? They must advance or recede. They cannot stand still much longer, in the midst of an enlightened public, on the *blot and no bar* platform. Swallow or disgorge the monster they must.

### THE BLOT AND NO BAR PLATFORM.

I have alleged that the position of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery is a position of *falsehood, fallacy and folly*. It is false, in that it deliberately and solemnly pronounces and denounces slavery as "a blot on our holy religion, utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcil-

able with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ." They scorn the example of the Divine Teacher on this subject. Nay, they ~~say~~ "teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness." As such, they are ~~not~~ "proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth." (See 1 Tim. vi. 1-5.)

The position of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on this subject is *fallacious*, because, while the later Assemblies have approved, endorsed, and re-uttered all the false testimonies and deliverances of former times, "during a period of nearly sixty years," pronouncing them all "true and capable of vindication from the word of God," they have done so *sub rosa*, under cover, in the lump and by the pile, and have carefully avoided any reiteration of these deliverances in detail. The members of the church and the public have thus been left in almost entire ignorance of the character and tendency of the deliverances endorsed. In the North, where the minutes of the Assembly are always printed, and where the sharp eyes of the abolitionists have all ferreted out and fully understood the sentiments and testimony held and uttered and endorsed as "true, and capable of vindication by the word of God," the people are pleased and appeased, and satisfied, *for the present*, with their anti-slavery position. Thus the *Synod of Ohio*, within the past year, "refer those desiring information, to the action of the General Assembly of A. D. 1818 on the subject of slavery, as a comprehensive summary of their views." There, they stand up straight on the *Blot Platform* of 1818.

But in the Southern States, where not one in ten of the members of the church ever see a copy of the minutes of the Assembly, and not one in a hundred ever saw the minutes of 1818, they, and the public generally, are kept in the dark as to the quality and quantity of significance that is intended and covered up by those swallowing resolutions that embrace and endorse at one sweep all the "sentiments held and uttered during a period of nearly sixty years." If every time the later Assemblies have endorsed the odious *action* of 1818 and other abolition measures, the documents had been republished and spread out in full before the world, the Southern people would long since have risen up in their indignation, and such foul abuse of themselves and their social relations would not have been endured—no, not for an hour.

To complete the *fallacy*, we are told *here*, that whatever may have been the sentiments held and uttered by the earlier Assemblies, they are to be referred to the fault of the times; and that the action of 1818 and of other years is to be regarded as "the old position" of the church on the subject of slavery. The action of the Assembly of 1818 is never laid before the people that they may judge for themselves. It is boldly asserted, and it has been generally believed, by those who have paid little attention to the subject, that the action of the Assembly of 1845 alone contains "the testimony of the church on slavery, the first after 1818, and its testimony from May, 1845, till now."

Strange as it may seem, this policy has been maintained with such adroitness and caution, and the *fallacy* has been so effectual, that multitudes of our Southern people have been deceived into the belief that the Assembly of 1845 had laid the slavery question on the shelf—that the subject was no more to be agitated in that body, and that the Old School Presbyterian Church occupies high, conservative, national, non-intervention ground on the subject of slavery! The action of

1846, which is emphatically the action of all actions—which utterly neutralizes whatever of conservatism, nationality, Southernism, or Scriptive morality may be supposed to be contained in the deliverance of 1845—and which deliberately and solemnly avouches all the past deliverances of the church as “substantially the same, uniform, and true, and capable of vindication from the word of God”—and which has thus filled the hungry maw of abolitionism with food to its own liking, quieted for the present their restless spirits, and given “*peace*,” the peace of the grave, to the church—this action of 1846 has been wickedly concealed from the members of the church and the people of the South. Here, they stand stooping on the NO BAR PLATFORM of 1845!

The *folly* of the Old School Presbyterian *position* on the subject of slavery—which I cannot but believe every open eye has already clearly seen—deserves to be signalized and exposed as follows:

#### ACTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF 1846.

“Our church has, from time to time, during a period of nearly sixty years, expressed its views on the subject of slavery. During all this period, it has held and uttered substantially the same sentiments. Believing that this uniform testimony is true and capable of vindication from the word of God, the Assembly is at the same time clearly of the opinion that it has already deliberately and solemnly spoken on this subject with sufficient fulness and clearness.”

#### ACTION OF 1818.

Slavery is a “gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature.”

Slavery is “utterly inconsistent with the law of God.”

Slavery is “inconsistent with the dictates of humanity and religion.”

Slavery is “totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ.”

“Slavery creates a paradox in the moral system.”

“Slavery exhibits rational, accountable and immortal beings in such circumstances as scarcely to leave them the power of moral action.”

“The slave is deprived of his natural right.”

“The slave is degraded as a human being.”

“Our country has inflicted a most grievous injury upon the unhappy Africans by bringing them into slavery.”

“It is a duty indispensably incumbent on all Christians to labor for the complete extinction of slavery.”

#### ACTION OF 1845.

Slavery is “no bar to Christian communion.”

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Slavery is “no bar to Christian communion.”

"It is manifestly the duty of all Christians to use their honest, earnest and unwearied endeavors to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible, throughout the world."

Slavery is "no bar to Christian communion."

"We rejoice that the church to which we belong commenced as early as any other in this country the good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery; and that in the same work many of its members have ever since been, and now are, among the most active, vigorous and efficient laborers."

Slavery is "no bar to Christian communion."

"The most virtuous part of the community [in the slave-holding States] abhor slavery and wish its extermination as sincerely as any others."

Slavery is "no bar to Christian communion."

"We do indeed tenderly sympathize with those portions of our church and our country where the evil of slavery has been entailed upon them. At the same time we earnestly exhort them to continue, and if possible to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery."

Slavery is "no bar to Christian communion."

"We exhort others to forbear harsh censures and uncharitable reflections on their brethren who unhappily live among slaves whom they cannot immediately set free; but who, at the same time, are really using all their influence, and all their endeavors, to bring them into a state of freedom, as soon as a door for it can be safely opened."

Slavery is "no bar to Christian communion."

"We warn all who belong to our denomination of Christians, against unduly extending the plea of necessity; against making it a cover for the love and practice of slavery, or a pretence for not using efforts that are lawful and practicable, to extinguish this evil."

Slavery is "no bar to Christian communion."

The evil consequences of slavery which we have named are "consequences not imaginary, but which connect themselves with its very existence."

Slavery is "no bar to Christian communion."

Slavery is "a blot on our holy religion."

Slavery is "no bar to Christian communion."

#### ACTION OF 1858.

"We see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith of our church" ON THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY.



Reader, this is "the exact position" of the Old School Presbyterian church on the subject of slavery. *Quis potest negare?* I defy any man to deny it. The Old School Presbyterian Assembly has never uttered one-tenth of this amount of testimony and denunciation against theft, murder, perjury, or piracy. And yet slavery is no bar to Christian communion! "A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart is at his left. Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor; so doth a little *folly* him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness; and the end of his talk is mischievous madness."

### ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION OF 1845.

The deliverance of the Assembly of 1845 has been generally claimed, in this section of the Union as a Southern or eminently National measure. It has been uniformly referred to by leading men in the South as a final settlement of the question of slavery, and as a satisfactory guaranty against the further agitation of the subject in the church and by the General Assembly. While the members of the church North "refer those desiring information to the action of the General Assembly, A. D. 1818, on the subject of slavery, as a comprehensive summary of their views," the members of the church South are in the habit of pointing with a sort of confidence and seeming triumph to the action of 1845.

Heretofore I have conceded to this action all that has been claimed for it by those who interpret it as deciding and settling the question for that church, that the holding of slaves is "no bar to christian communion." Admitting this to be the true intent of the action of 1845, there is a very serious objection to the Assembly's making any such decision. Why, it may be asked, did they not decide the question *right*? Yes, but they had no *right* to decide it. The Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, are the church's interpretation of what the Scriptures teach on all subjects essential or appertaining to religious doctrines and morals. There is a question of *jurisdiction* involved here. If the Assembly may decide that slavery is no bar to christian communion, they may decide that it is. And if the Assembly may decide that the relation of master and servant is not a sin, they may decide that the relation of husband and wife is not a sin. But if the Assembly may decide that the relation of husband and wife is not a sin, and so kindly consent to "let them marry," they may decide that the relation of husband and wife is a sin, and so condemn "Holy matrimony." The right to decide affirmatively implies the right to decide negatively; and the right to decide negatively involves the right to decide affirmatively. So, I may add, the Assembly has no right to *decide* that *dancing* is right or that it is wrong. They have no right to decide that drinking brandy, wine, or cider, is "no bar." For if they may decide that it is *not*, they may decide that it is, and then the church is cleared of all who do not first enter the *circle*. Nay, the Assembly have no authority to decide that theft, or murder, or idolatry, is a sin. For if they may decide that the Scriptures *do* make any one of these a *bar*, they may decide that it is "no bar to christian communion," and so "the house of prayer" may soon become "a den of thieves."

The truth is, the foundations of these important and sacred relations, ordained by God, are laid broad and deep and indestructible, far back of all human jurisdiction, and secure from the officious meddlings of church courts. And the lines of the distinction and separation of right and wrong are drawn full, and clear,

and straight, on Heaven's own chart, not to be effaced, altered or amended by votes of white surplice or black cloth. All acts, testimonies and deliverances on the subject of slavery by the Old School Presbyterian Assembly are inappropriate to the functions of the church of Christ, and are to be considered as so much officious meddling with *the things that belong unto Cæsar*. The subject is one with which the church has no right to interfere. They may just as well claim the right to utter their testimony and make their deliverances on the subject of monarchy, aristocracy, republicanism, and democracy. All such acts and testimonies by the church are null and void, *de jure*.

The action of the Assembly of 1845, is also void and valueless, *de facto*. After all that has been claimed for this boasted action of 1845, so often and so confidently referred to as *the final settlement* of the slavery question in the Old School Presbyterian Church, and as a conservative, national platform, safe and satisfactory to Southern people, it will be found, upon close inspection, and a careful, impartial analysis, to be positively no such thing. It is not worth one straw—except, it may be, to show unmistakably which way the wind blows. It does not *decide* that slavery is not a sin. It does not decide that the holding of slaves is no bar to christian communion. This “deliverance” was brought about with great caution and matchless skill, under the direction and by the hand of an astute master in the church. It has deceived many, if it has not deceived *the very elect*. I earnestly entreat the reader, whose only wish is to ascertain the truth on this subject, to sit down with me for a few moments, and let us together examine the words of this document, and find out, if we can, the “exact position” of those who approve and adopt it. If, after this, he shall dissent from the views which I have just now expressed, I shall surely be content to let him alone, and I hope he will be satisfied.

The report of the committee, which, with the two resolutions, as heretofore given, was adopted by the Assembly of 1845, has these words :

“The question which this Assembly is called to decide is this : Do the Scriptures teach that the holding of slaves, without regard to circumstances, is a sin ; the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the Church of Christ ? It is impossible to answer this question in the affirmative.”

Observe, if you please, the qualifying clause, “without regard to circumstances,” so significant, and so carefully inserted in this connection. The question is not whether the holding of slaves is a sin. But is the holding of slaves “*without regard to circumstances*,” or, as it is expressed elsewhere in the document, is the holding of slaves, “*under all circumstances*,” a sin ? No wonder the Assembly found it impossible to answer this question in the affirmative. Even Dr. McMaster and Dr. Monfort, of the *Presbyterian of the West*, would not say *yes* to this question. They admit that there *may* be peculiar circumstances in which the holding of slaves is not a sin. Indeed, there are comparatively very few abolitionists who do not admit the same thing. And yet this is all that the Assembly of 1845 admit. In answering this question in the *negative*, they only say that slavery is not, “*under all circumstances*,” a sin. *Sin* is the rule—*no sin* is the exception.

Do the Scriptures teach that the killing of a fellow man, is, “without regard to circumstances,” or “under all circumstances,” a sin ? The Assembly would find it equally impossible to answer *this* question in the affirmative. Homicide is a sin ; but there may be circumstances in which it is lawful, and no sin, to take the life of a fellow man. So the Assembly testifies in regard to slavery. It is a “blot” on our holy religion, utterly inconsistent with the law of God and totally

irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ." But it is not so, "without regard to circumstances," and in every particular case. There may be exceptions to the general rule. A man may, by legacy or deed of gift, received by mail, late on Saturday night, become *possessed* of a dozen slaves, and may *hold* them until Monday morning, without sin. In such circumstances "where the evil of slavery has been entailed on them," the holders of slaves are to be excused, if they are "using all their endeavors to bring them into a state of freedom as soon as a door for it can be safely opened." Is the holding of slaves, without regard to circumstances, a sin? No, say the Assembly; it is not a sin "under all circumstances." There *may* be circumstances in which it is not a sin.

Observe also, if you please, another qualifying clause, materially modifying the sense of the Assembly's decision. "Do the Scriptures teach that the holding of slaves, without regard to circumstances, is a sin, *the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the church of Christ.*" Looking at this last clause of the question, it is evident that the Assembly did not intend to decide even that slaveholding is not, under all circumstances, a sin; but only that it is not, "under all circumstances, a sin, *the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the church of Christ.*"

The question which the Assembly was called to decide,—which they felt it impossible to answer in the affirmative, and which, if answered at all, was answered in the negative; and which they are generally supposed to have answered in the negative by the adoption of the resolutions and report of the committee—is not whether slavery is a sin; but it is, whether the holding of slaves is, under all circumstances, a sin, *the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the church of Christ.*

It is evidently implied that there are some sins, or that there may be a sin, the renunciation of which should not be a condition of membership in the church of Christ. And is this Old School Presbyterian Theology! Is this Old School Presbyterian Ethics! Is this Old School Presbyterian Church Discipline! Gog and Magog! What a misty, muddy, miserable, mongrel mess of misreckoning and mismanagement must have been mustered on the occasion of this notable *deliverance* of 1845! Shades of Calvin, and of Knox, and of Samuel Miller! Where are they? Where are thy wise men? The scribe? The disputer and skilful player upon words? We had verily thought that the *renouncing of all sin* was universally made a condition of membership by every branch of the church of Christ. It remained for the Old School Presbyterian Assembly of 1845 to make the discovery that some sins may be reserved, retained and indulged by members of the church without incurring her displeasure and her discipline—that there is at least one sin, the renunciation of which should not be made a condition of membership in the church of Christ!

The truth is, as every careful reader must see, the Assembly of 1845 *decides* that the holding of slaves, "under ordinary circumstances," is a sin; but that it is not, "under all circumstances," a sin, the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the church. In other words, though a blot on our holy religion, it is no bar to christian communion. This is what is expressed—this is what is meant, and this is what was designed to be understood by the action of 1845.

The two resolutions constituting a part of the action of 1845, having been already given to the reader in my first article, I need not reproduce them here in full. They are queer things; vague, void and valueless, except as mere curiosi-

ties in the way of *dodging*. The first declares that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was originally organized upon the conceded principle that the existence of domestic slavery, under the circumstances in which it is found in the southern portion of the country, is no bar to christian communion.

The *existence* of domestic slavery! Why do not the Assembly say *the holding of slaves*, as these are the terms of the question which they are called on to decide? What do they mean—do they mean anything—or do they design to mean nothing, when they *decide* that the *existence* of domestic slavery is no bar to christian communion? The existence of domestic slavery is not a personal act or habit, a virtue or a vice, that may be affirmed or alleged as a credit or a crime against an individual. Who ever dreamed that anybody was ever guilty of the *existence* of a state of things, or social condition, in a community? Is the *existence* of conjugal perfidy, parental tyranny, novercal cruelty, treachery, and treason, a sin, the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the church of Christ? Is the *existence* of theft, perjury or piracy a heresy in doctrine or an immorality in practice, a bar to christian communion?

But not to insist on this criticism of the *language* of the resolution—though the language is really unpardonable, whether used carelessly, ignorantly, or from design—the resolution announces a mere truism, a fact notorious and never questioned, that there were slaveholders who took part in the original organization of the Assembly; and that, although nothing was said or set down as a principle of action on the subject, yet it is to be presumed and conceded that no body of men would organize an association upon principles that would exclude themselves.

The *second* resolution richly deserves a scorching; but as I have already trespassed too long upon the time and patience of the reader, I must forbear. You will find the resolution in full among the documents of my first article. It asserts that “the petitions which ask the Assembly to make the holding of slaves in itself a matter of discipline, do virtually require the judicatory to dissolve itself”—that “the tendency is to separate the Northern from the Southern portion of the church,” and that this would perhaps be the means of bringing about “a dissolution of the Union of our beloved country,” and a ruinous and unnecessary schism between brethren who maintain a common faith!” The reader will not fail to observe the significant words, *the holding of slaves IN ITSELF*, so cautiously and carefully retained in this resolution.

So bald a confession of the power and influence of *such* a motive on *such* men, at the expense of their own *sentiments* and *uniform* testimony, seems to lead to the suspicion of the prevalence of a strange infatuation! Slavery is an evil of immense magnitude. It is a blot on our holy religion, and is totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ. But we dare not make the renunciation of this sin a condition of membership. For if we do, our church will be divided; and then what will become of our great, constant and unalterable, homogeneous, like-minded, national, conservative Assembly, which knows no North, no South, no East, no West?!

If the reader has any desire to have his assurance made doubly sure, as to the propriety of our interpretation of this famous *deliverance*, he may have it more than confirmed by the testimony of DR. MONFORT, the anti-slavery editor of the *Presbyterian of the West*, and DR. RICE, the editor of the *St. Louis Presbyterian*, and Chairman of the Assembly's Committee of 1845—and also by the resolutions of the *Synod of Cincinnati*.

DR. MONFORT, commenting upon the action of the Assembly of 1845, says:

"Its true intention may be learned from the action itself, in which it was twice clearly stated, viz. : The question asked of the Assembly is, whether the holding of slaves is, *under all circumstances*, a heinous sin, calling for the discipline of the church? And again, 'The question which this Assembly is called on to decide is this,—do the Scriptures teach that the holding of slaves, without regard to circumstances, is a sin, the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the church of Christ?'"

"These questions are answered in the negative. The Assembly think that there may be cases where slave-holding is not a heinous sin,' and does not 'call for the discipline of the 'church,' the renunciation of which is not to be made 'a condition of membership.' This action (of 1845) is a virtual condemnation of slavery, as it implies that, except where circumstances are peculiar, it is a heinous sin, calling for the discipline of the church."

"The first resolution says, in substance, that when the Assembly was organized as a bond of union, it brought together, in one body, churches both of the free and slave States. If slave-holding must in all cases be disciplined, the Assembly would never have been organized, for its organization brought into one fellowship slaveholders and non-slaveholders.

"The second resolution asserts for substance of doctrine, that such a course would be the dissolution of the Assembly, which was made a bond of union, and would be the bringing about of an unnecessary schism."

This is the interpretation of Dr. Monfort, a northern editor, who says also and elsewhere, "The church holds [slaveholding] and we hold it, to be *per se*, in itself, necessarily, a heinous and scandalous sin, calling for the discipline of the church upon any of her members *who are really chargeable with its guilt.*"

The Synod of Cincinnati is a very large body, consisting of eighty or one hundred members, and is notoriously anti-slavery. It is worth something to know what such a body of anti-slavery men think and say of this action of the Assembly of 1845.

THE SYNOD OF CINCINNATI—a body, says Dr. Rice, known to be *anti-slavery* in October, 1845, passed, by an almost unanimous vote, the following resolutions:

"1. *Resolved*, That this Synod cordially approve the action of the Assembly (of 1845) in refusing to make slaveholding in itself, without regard to circumstances, a bar to Christian fellowship."

"2. *Resolved*, That this Synod does not understand the last Assembly as repealing, or designing to repeal any testimony borne by previous Assemblies against the system of American slavery."

The careful reader will note, and know how to value, this testimony of the Synod of Cincinnati. They *approve* the action of the Assembly of 1845. This is something. Great numbers of our southern people have been taught to believe that the action of 1845 was a great Southern triumph; and they will be surprised to learn that it is approved at the North, generally, as "in perfect harmony" with the action of 1818, and of all preceding Assemblies. Slaveholding, *in itself*—slaveholding, without regard to circumstances—is no bar to christian communion. And who will say it should be? Not Beecher, nor Cheever, nor Thompson. The Assembly might safely say the same thing of homicide, profaning the Sabbath, disobedience to parents, sundering the marriage bond, or resisting the civil magistrate. No one of them, *in itself*—without regard to circumstances—should be made a bar to christian communion.

Now let us consult DR. RICE, a southern editor, the chairman of the committee

that reported the action of 1845, and who probably drew up the report and presided at the deliverance. *He* knows—if anybody knows—"its true intention:"

DR. RICE. "The Assembly (of 1845) did not even decide that, under any circumstances, it is entirely right to hold slaves, but only that it is not a matter of discipline."

DR. RICE further says: "The interpretation of a document by the body adopting it is universally understood as settling its meaning. \* \* The Assembly of 1846 declared that paper (the action of 1845) to contain substantially the same sentiments which our church had expressed during the period of nearly sixty years, leaving the testimony of preceding Assemblies in full force. \* \* \* The Church has interpreted this (action of 1845) as in perfect harmony with those of preceding years. There is absolutely no ambiguity in the language of the document in question. There is no part of it liable to be misunderstood." (See *Dr. Rice's Editorials in the St. Louis Presbyterian*, 1856.)

This is the boasted deliverance of 1845—so sound, so safe, and so satisfactory to the South!—as expounded by its author. The reader can now see how it is, and why it is, that the Assemblies of 1818 and 1845 "held and uttered substantially the same sentiments." The interpretation put upon the action of 1845 by the Assembly of 1846, *settles* its meaning and declares it to contain substantially the same sentiments which the church has held and uttered during a period of nearly sixty years! The Church has interpreted the action of 1845 as *in perfect harmony* with the action of 1818. This odious action and its foul blot on our holy religion is left "*in full force*" against every slaveholding member of the church. What, then, is the action of 1845 worth? It leaves the stain and fixes the stigma of wilful, deliberate and daily sin upon every slaveholder in the church; and then graciously allows him to hold on to his position in the church, with his slaves and his sins around him,—not because it is "*entirely right*," but confessedly and only to save the life of the organization, to avoid dissolution, and prevent a schism between brethren who maintain a common, constant and unalterable faith!

Is it any wonder that the fires of political abolitionism are kept *hot* at the North, when they are fed, furnished and fanned by the *action* of so large and so powerful a body as the Old School Presbyterians at the South? Are they not thus encouraged and confirmed in the confidence which they express, that "the most virtuous part of the community" in the slaveholding states "abhor slavery and wish its extermination as sincerely as" they do? and that "they are really using all their influence and all their endeavors to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout christendom, and, if possible, throughout the world?"

It is idle for any one to say, Well, we don't care for their resolutions and deliverances so long as they let us alone. They! Who are they? It is not *they*, but *we*; or they and we together—our own people, citizens of our own section—the "homogeneous, like-minded brethren of a common faith!" No protest against these deliverances by Southern members of the Assembly—nay, southern members voted for them, and southern members advocate and defend them, and boast of them!

## A LITTLE OF THE PERSONAL.

(BY WAY OF EPISODE.)

I have been several times asked, "How is it and why is it that you who have been all your life-long an Old School Presbyterian, and have so lately taken your position separate and apart from that church, now come down upon them so severely?"

Another objects and says:—"You have been in connection with the New School General Assembly, and have been acting with them for twenty years; and their position on the slavery question is as unsound as you represent the Old School to be. Where is your consistency in co-operating with them until so lately as May, 1857?"

A third class see through this whole affair, and with a significant shrug and a knowing air, say:—"Well, this is consistent, is it not?—to go to the door of the Old School Assembly last May, in New Orleans, propose terms and beg to be taken into that church, and when rejected and refused admission, turn round and abuse the Old School Presbyterians as a set of Abolitionists unsafe to a Southern community!"

To all these questions and objections, as well as to other and similar imputations of evil or unworthy motives and charges of inconsistency, when made by the parties involved—and I have from the first, fully expected they would be, covertly and in private corners—I beg leave respectfully to decline giving any answer. These whisperers know well that their insinuations and silly talk about unworthy motives are as false and forceless as their position on the subject of slavery. The iron of the argument has entered their souls; and they would gladly turn the eyes of the jury toward the witness himself, lest they should fall upon the recorded evidence and their own autograph signatures which he holds in his hands.

In the course of a long and active life, in which I have thought and said a good many things, I have never for once made consistency a rule of action. I do not believe an honest man will ever adopt such a rule. Truth and the right are our only sure and safe guides. I have no respect for the man, either in Church or State, who is always stickling for consistency—who is more careful to be consistent than he is to be right—and who, when he finds himself mistaken or wrong, clings to his mistake and perpetuates the wrong, only that he may boast of a "constant and unalterable" consistency.

The mere asking of such questions, or the making of such objections as the above, is a mournful proof that the fools and followers of the dark ages, when the brains of a nation were crowded into one skull, still live, and move, or are moved, and have their being, but do not their thinking, in this age. Truth is truth, no matter who tells it. And facts are stubborn things, however pale may be the ink, however frail the paper, and however fragile the pen that records them. Even the accomplice, though *particeps criminis*, is by our laws sometimes permitted to turn State's evidence, and is oft-times believed. At all events, the facts which he uncovers, and to which he directs the attention of the jurors, are not the less facts, because he relates them. We may not believe the story of a wretch escaped from a piratical vessel. But when he leads us to the retired and unfrequented harbor, and we ourselves, under his suspicious guidance, draw near

the black hulk, as she crouches and seems to hide her bloody visage beneath the dark waves; when we behold the bloody flag streaming from the mast-head, and hear the horrid oaths of the graceless crew—when we go aboard and stumble over the mangled bodies of the graveless victims that lie upon their slippery decks—when we enter their dark den, and count and measure their ill-gotten treasure—shall we doubt the testimony of our own senses, and hesitate to give our assent to the truth and the facts which our eyes have seen, our ears have heard and our hands have handled, and begin to object to the guide, and to enquire how, why and when it was he forsook the miserable ship, and what are his motives for discovering to us the facts?

In my investigations thus far, I have not adduced a single fact seriously or in any wise affecting the position of the Old School Presbyterian Church on the subject of slavery, in regard to which I have left the reader to rely upon my testimony for his conclusions. I have neither desired nor expected him to take my word, or to float passively in the wake of my opinions. I prefer that he should keep his head on his own shoulders. I have enough to do to take care of my own. I have relied upon the truth, upon the facts and arguments, as being fully able, of themselves, to make their way through the world without the aid of my poor name. Indeed, I have supposed that an angel from heaven could not make a man doubt that three times three are nine, or believe that three times three are ten.

But if it is necessary that I should come before the reader clothed in such a character that he will prefer to take my word before the facts and arguments, perhaps I had better dress up and do all I can to gain his confidence, so that I can do his thinking for him, dictate to him his belief, and thus relieve him at once from all that sort of trouble. On this ground, I believe I shall try to satisfy him as to the ugly insinuations at the beginning of this article. I can do no harm, except it may be by a mere waste of time. It may result in conciliation, even if it should fail to produce conviction.

### MY ANSWER.

I never was an *Old School* Presbyterian. I never yet have seen the day when I was willing to be. I have been a Presbyterian all my life. My father was a Presbyterian minister; and Presbyterian blood has run through my ancestor's veins—I will not say ever since the flood—but from a time beyond which "my young remembrance runneth not." I am the same Presbyterian to-day—I hold and utter "substantially the same sentiments" which I held and uttered, when I was licensed as a minister of the Gospel more than thirty years ago.

It surely ought to be known to all who have paid any attention to matters of this character, that, as there are several distinct classes of Methodists, and seven or eight *bodies* of the Baptist denomination, so there are equally as many separate *bodies* which bear the name of Presbyterian. Old Schoolism is not Presbyterianism. The Old School Presbyterian Church, in its distinctive character, dates back only about twenty years.

For the satisfaction of those of my readers who have not been placed in circumstances favorable to the acquisition of a knowledge of such questions, I will here state a few facts as matters of mere history. I shall offer no evidence in



support of these facts, as they are matters of record, known to all men who have paid attention to the history of the times, and will not be questioned.

In May, 1838, "the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," the largest body of Presbyterians in our country—having been a united and co-operating, though not always nor altogether, a like-minded and homogeneous body—was separated into two very nearly equal grand divisions, the New and Old School, on account of difference of doctrinal belief and modes of interpreting the Confession of Faith, and also on account of a difference of views on questions of ecclesiastical policy. Certain constitutional principles, deemed by many of vital and essential importance, were involved in this controversy.

When this division took place, acting from a conviction of duty, and for reasons satisfactory to me at the time, and with which I am fully content, and have been every hour since, after a lapse of twenty years—I chose to adhere to that division which has been popularly designated and known as the New School Presbyterian church.

The anti-slavery action of 1818, which took place forty years ago, and twenty years before the division, I have already said, is to be set down to the fault of the *times*, rather than to the *men* of those times. The subject of slavery had not then received that attention, and careful investigation in the light of Divine Revelation, which the agitations of a later day have elicited. And but for the repeated and emphatic *revivals* of that ancient deliverance, of late years, with all its odious features, I for one should never trouble myself to disturb its repose. Indeed it is probable that, but for the resolutions of more modern times, which reach back and embrace a period of nearly sixty years, and thus invest with "full force" all the deliverances of preceding Assemblies, pronouncing "the sentiments held and uttered during all this period all substantially the same," avouching them as "true and capable of vindication from the word of God"—these old documents might have been overlooked, and the attention of this age would never have been called to them.

After the division of the Church, the subject of slavery was more or less agitated by both bodies. Both Assemblies, the New and the Old School, without doubt, approved and held, as "in full force," the action of 1818. For the last eight or ten years—during which my own attention has been more especially awakened to the subject—it has at different times been discussed in the New School Assembly.

Our representatives, the commissioners from this State and the other slave-holding States, in the New School General Assembly, during many years, have stood up like men, and repelled every imputation of Northern fanatics, resisted every encroachment of Southern rights, and with outspoken boldness denounced all these anti-slavery deliverances as unconstitutional, unscriptural, oppressive and unjust. No body of men have been more bold, decided and out-spoken on the *right* of slavery, none have spoken and written more, or more effectively, and none have fought harder, or obtained more victories in the cause of Southern rights and Southern institutions, than the Southern New School Presbyterians, with whom it has been my pleasure, as far as my poor abilities would allow, to stand side by side for twenty years past. Our solemn protests, got up with great care, and clothed in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," and signed generally by every Southern delegate, will tell of our position and our struggles, as well as our victories, as long as the records of those Assemblies shall resist the tooth of time.

My noble-hearted friend and brother, the Rev. ROBERT McLAIN, now the talented, pious and popular minister of the Presbyterian church at Enterprise, Miss., has been a hero and a conqueror in this war of the sections. A regular-built and put-and-out fire-eater of the Calhoun, Quitman and Davis school—(and by the way, this is about the only objection I ever had to him—he *would* vote the Democrat, and I *wouldn't*; and yet, I don't think we differ much)—always wide awake, earnest and honest, fearless and firm, the thunder of his eloquence came down like a sledge hammer upon the Abolition platforms that were shoved upon the floor of the Assembly.

The lamented Mr. HOLLEY, now no more, but once and long the sincere, hearty, practical and successful preacher of Mississippi, whose praise is in all the churches, and the memory of whose name is embalmed in the hearts of our people, stood shoulder to shoulder with Ross, Boyd, Marshall, Dickerson, Caldwell, and many others who did battle for years in these defenses of the South against Northern fanaticism and Northern aggression.

And the Rev. Mr. MORRISON, now of Shongalo, the good and true—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!"—he it is who penned the famous resolutions of Lexington Presbytery South, declaring that they were "slaveholders on principle, believing it to be, according to the Bible, right," and defying the disciplinary power of the Assembly. The action of Lexington Presbytery South, led to our separation from the New School General Assembly in May, 1857. Not that we were excluded, as some pretend, nor that the holding of slaves was made a bar to communion—it was, not then, and it is not now—but we withdrew ourselves from them as incorrigible sinners against the truth, and the "doctrine which is according to Godliness, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ," on the subject of slavery. This separation, or voluntary withdrawal on our part, was followed by the Richmond Convention in August, 1857.

This was not our first Convention. A Southern Convention, large and respectable, composed of delegates from the New School Presbyteries in the Southern States, had been held in Murfreesboro', Tennessee, during the year 1853. Repeated action on the part of Presbyteries and Synods, the lower judicatories of the Church, had taken place from year to year, and for a series of years. These remonstrances, resolutions and protests are all on record. Many of them are now in my possession. And I shall hardly be deemed egotistical or vain, when I add that I contributed my due share in producing these remonstrances. Many of them are pungent and to the point. All of them are eminently Southern, in denying to the Assembly the right to *testify* or *decide* on the question of slavery, any more than on the subject of marriage or monarchy. Our doctrine is, that the Church has no doctrine on the subject of slavery. We have uniformly held, and maintained with a power of argument seldom equalled on any subject, the doctrine of non-intervention, or *no doctrine*, on this subject—and that all acts, deliverances and testimonies of Presbyterian Assemblies, ancient or modern, on the subject of slavery, are "inappropriate to the functions of the Church of Christ." Our Saviour and his Apostles uttered no testimony and made no deliverances on this subject. During a period of more than "sixty years," they exercised no jurisdiction over it. They inculcated the duties of master and slave, as they did those of husband and wife, parent and child, magistrate and subject; but of *slavery* they uttered not one word. The servant must not be above his Lord. If Christ exercised no jurisdiction over the subject of slavery, the Church of Christ may not assume that jurisdiction. Upon this principle—having failed

and despaired of its establishment in the New School Presbyterian Assembly—our UNITED SYNOD of Presbyterians, resulting from the Richmond Convention, was organized at Knoxville, Tenn., in April, 1858. I must give my readers this Synod's "Declaration of Principles" some of these days. It will stand close to the Declaration of Independence in all time to come. But I have already trespassed upon the time and patience of the reader, and must add no more just now.

*"But you tried to gain admission into the Old School Presbyterian Church, were sternly met at the door and promptly rejected; and now you turn round and abuse them as a set of Abolitionists, unfit to live with, and unsafe to a Southern community!"*

Sure enough! Here is this ugly beast still standing before me!

Monstrum horrendum informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum!

I must defer any attentions, however, just now, and reserve what I have to offer in this direction for another column.

For the present I will only say, that in our proposal for union with the Old School Presbyterian Church, it was submitted "as indispensable to an honorable union on our part," that they should right themselves, on their part, on the subject of slavery, and the *jurisdiction* of the Church in regard to it. This they did not choose to do. Dr. Breckenridge, who was "omnipotent in the Assembly," said, "so far—as to the question of slavery, our body is quiet, homogeneous, and of one mind." The editor of the Pittsburgh Banner and Advocate, said they were afraid of *importing a virus*, into their body. The Synod of Ohio, after swearing afresh to the action of 1818, as "a comprehensive summary of their views," send down to the Assembly in New Orleans, May, 1858, an earnest request "not to entertain or consider any such proposal," on account of our "avowed opinions respecting slavery, which are contrary to the uniform testimony of the General Assembly, as that it is morally right—is a divine ordinance—and that it is not cognizable by the judicatories of the Church." Others, editors and leaders, remonstrated on the same ground, and gave it as their opinion that it would not do to risk the slavery *virus* of our Synod. Their "Church had, from time to time, during a period of nearly sixty years, expressed its views on the subject of slavery. During all this period it had held and uttered substantially the same sentiments. Believing that this uniform testimony is "true, and capable of vindication from the Word of God," the Assembly in New Orleans said they could "see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith of [their] Church" on the subject of slavery, or on the other subjects referred, merely to consummate a union with us. We were not *like-minded* with them; and so our proposition was declined, and the reasons given in the words quoted near the head of my first column. The reader has seen them. Let him recur to them again.

## THE PROPOSED UNION WITH THE OLD SCHOOL.

The fact of our proposition of union with the Old School Presbyterians and the *reason* of it; the fact of our rejection by the Old School and the *reason* of it; the *terms* in which the union was proposed, and the *terms* in which it was rejected, are all down, marked and numbered in the original ideal programme of my work, and constitute very important points in the field of my operations. I

intended to visit all those places, and survey them carefully, and to make them tell on "the exact position" of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery. In the disposition of my columns, however, I had assigned these the last place, as being of a somewhat private, personal, or, as it may be deemed, sectarian character. But as I have suffered myself to be somewhat jostled from my original plan, I have concluded to devote this column to the consideration of these facts, and such of their antecedents and surroundings, as I may be able to crowd together in a small space.

First. The fact of our proposition of union with the Old School Presbyterians. Who are *we*, or *they*, who made this proposition? What their opinions on the subject of slavery, and their position on the question of ecclesiastical intervention on this subject? Were those opinions openly avowed, fearlessly maintained, extensively published, and generally known?

The Southern members of the New School General Assembly in Cleveland, Ohio, May, 1857, in the crisis of their withdrawal and final separation from that body, having exhibited such christian heroism, and eloquence and power of argument, as to compel the respect and profound admiration of their opponents, and to win for themselves the name of the *Spartan band* in defence of Southern rights and Southern christian principles—presented a paper, with their individual names assigned, containing a succinct statement of their views on the subject of slavery. This paper was read publicly on the floor of the Assembly, by Mr. Cleland, of Kentucky, was published universally in the religious papers, and given to the world very extensively through the secular press. And although our doctrine is, that the Church, as such, has, and should have, no doctrine on the subject of slavery as a civil or political institution, I will furnish this paper entire to the reader, that he may be fully informed of the individual views of the party in question:

*"Position of the Southern (New School) Presbyterian Churches upon the subject of Slavery." Presented and read in the General Assembly, Cleveland, Ohio, May, 1857.*

"We do not believe that the system of American slavery as an appointment of God, stands precisely, in all respects, upon the same footing with the family relation—with that of the husband and wife,—parent and child.

"But upon the contrary, this system differs from the family relation both with respect to the date of its origin, the nearness and sacredness of its relations, the nature of its peculiar obligations, the design and length of its continuation.

"The relation of master and slave did not exist from the beginning, as did that of the family relation, nor do we believe that it will continue to the end.

"But slavery does exist by divine ordination and recognition for wise purposes, to be overruled for His glory, in the elevation, civilization and final redemption of the African race. Sin cannot be predicated of the relation itself, but, of the abuse of that relation. It stands in the same category with the family relation in the fact that it is ordained by God, in the sense above explained; and in the fact that, like the family relation, it is the subject of divine legislation. When we say that the slaveholding relation 'is right,' we do not mean to say that every system of slavery is right, as it may have existed in other ages and in other countries, but only as it now exists with us; and under all the circumstances in which we are now placed. When we say 'it is right' for our churches to hold slaves under the present circumstances, we mean to say they are acting consistently with the spirit and letter of the gospel in so doing. And were we

to assert the contrary, as the resolutions under consideration would have us assert, to wit: that we hold slaveholding to be wrong, it would place us before the world as destitute not only of the spirit of christianity, but as being bereft of every principle of moral honesty.

"We believe that the slave is not prepared for freedom; that to give it to him now, under all the circumstances, would not be best, either for master or slave.

"We believe that freedom is better than slavery, where men are prepared to appreciate it—that slavery is better than freedom under certain circumstances—just as it is with respect to human governments. Our American republicanism may be the best form of government for us, but under present circumstances, it might be a great curse to Russia or Mexico."

## OUR OPPOSITION TO CHURCH ACTION ON SLAVERY.

Against the right or authority of the church to interfere in any way with the subject of slavery, these men stood up in that Assembly with a staunch and unyielding firmness, and supported and fortified their position with a zeal, and eloquence, and a force of reasoning never yet surpassed by any body of men, civil or ecclesiastical, in our country. The celebrated speech of Mr. DICKERSON, of Kentucky, was published at length in the Christian Observer of Philadelphia, and several other papers, and was spread broadcast over the land, in a neatly printed pamphlet. In the clear, distinct, and unambiguous enunciation of its principles, lucid exposition, forcible illustration, and regular, straight-forward consecutive argumentation, as well as the chaste and classic beauty of its style, the gentlemanly tone and christian suavity of its spirit, this speech is but a specimen of others, less carefully prepared and less comprehensive and complete, that were heard on the floor of that memorable Assembly, and that fell with thrilling effect upon the ears of the Northern crowds that were present on that occasion. Mr. Dickerson, in the opening of his speech, announced the position which he proposed to maintain, as follows:

"That the subject of slavery—it being a political institution—lies **WITHOUT** the province of ecclesiastical supervision:—that the rights and immunities of membership, in the Presbyterian Church, in *no way* and in *no degree*, depend upon the opinions or practice of individuals in relation to slaveholding;—and that all agitation of this subject in our General Assemblies is *illegitimate* to their proper functions;—and that this whole subject should, therefore, be totally ignored."

And near the close of his speech:

"Cease these hurtful and injudicious interferences with the State. Confine yourself to the sphere confessedly legitimate to the Church. Return to the policy of the Apostles. All such agitation as tends to bring the Church and the State into collision—all such action as tends to bring discredit upon our Church-membership who are slaveholders, and injure their Church immunities, is as unscriptural as it is contrary to our ecclesiastical Constitution."

The RICHMOND CONVENTION, called by the Southern members of the Assembly, and being in session August 27, 1857, adopted the following:

"Whereas all acts, resolutions and testimonies of past General Assemblies, and especially the action of the last General Assembly, whereby suspicions and doubts of the good standing and equal rights and privileges of slaveholding

members of the Church, or imputations or charges against their Christian character, have been either implied or expressed, are contrary to the example and teachings of Christ and his Apostles, and are a violation of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church:

"And whereas the relation of master and servant, in itself considered, or farther than the relative duties arising therefrom, and slavery, as an institution of the State, do not properly belong to the Church judicatories, as subjects for discussion and inquiry:

"And whereas, in the judgment of this Convention, there is no prospect of a cessation of this agitation of slavery in the General Assembly, so long as there are slaveholders in connection with the Church: therefore,

"1. *Resolved*, That we recommend to the Presbyteries in connection with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, to withdraw from said body.

"2. *Resolved*, That in the judgment of this Convention, nothing can be made the basis for discipline in the Presbyterian Church, which is not specifically referred to in the Constitution as crime or heresy.

"3. Is against condemnation without formal trial.

"4. Recommends a meeting at Knoxville, to organize 'The United Synod.'

"5. Adopts the Confession, &c., of the Presbyterian Church."

The above was reported by the Business Committee, and adopted unanimously. After which, the following was moved and carried without a dissenting voice—two members, the Rev. Dr. Boyd and the Rev. Mr. Marshall, having been excused from voting:

"*Resolved*, That a union between us and our Old School brethren, could it be effected on terms acceptable to both sides, would be conducive to the best interests of the Church of Christ; and this Convention, after a free and full interchange of views and opinions on this subject, do now recommend that the United Synod, when formed and duly organized, shall invite the General Assembly (O. S.) to a fraternal conference with us in reference to such a union."—(See *Proceedings of the Richmond Convention*, pp. 11, 12.)

## UNITED SYNOD'S DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

The UNITED SYNOD was regularly organized at Knoxville, Tenn., in April, 1858. In their Declaration of Principles, they say:

"Inasmuch as neither our Saviour nor his Apostles intimated that the slaveholding relation was sinful, and as they did not attempt to remove slaveholders from the Church, by legislation, or by testifying against it; and further, as the system of slavery is an institution of the State, its continuance or abolition depending entirely upon the will of the State, irrespective of the views and decisions of Church courts, it is the opinion of this Synod that the discussion or agitation of slavery in the judicatories of the Church—except so far as respects the moral and religious duties growing out of the relation of master and slave—is inappropriate to said judicatories. This Synod, representing Presbyteries that have withdrawn from their former ecclesiastical connections because of the repeated and unconstitutional action on slavery by the General Assembly, therefore declares, that under the present Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, the agitation of slavery in any of our judicatories, farther than pertains to the moral and religious duties arising from the relation, would be

inconsistent with the design of our withdrawal from our former connection, and in forming a separate organization. Whilst, then, we propose no alteration in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, believing that as it now stands, the spirit of it is against the agitation of slaveholding in the Church, we express the opinion that those who unite with us, or who may come after us, will be under a moral obligation, so long as the Constitution remains as it is, to exclude slavery, (the agitation of which has already divided three large denominations in this country,) as a subject of discussion, from the Church Courts.

“Entertaining the above views, and disclaiming all responsibility for and endorsement of the action, resolutions and testimonies of past Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church, whereby suspicions and doubts of the good standing and equal rights and privileges of the slaveholding members of the Church, or implications or charges against their christian character, have been either implied or expressed—*this UNITED SYNOD is organized.*”—(See *Minutes of the United Synod*, pp 10, 11.)

I have given these extracts from the Proceedings of the Convention, and from the Minutes of the United Synod, to a length somewhat extended and fatiguing to the reader, that he may have, in their own words, an accurate and clearly defined view of the exact position and principles of the body of men who proposed the union in question. I desire not to annoy the reader; and if he choose, he need not of course read these wearisome documents. But in that case, I shall expect him to occupy his own sphere, and to hold and express only the opinions which his *master* has excoagitated for him, and not to *talk* about matters which he has not had the time, or the patience, or the courage to investigate. To the candid and impartial reader, I would say, mark well the principles so freely avowed and so fully expressed by these men. I deem it the highest honor to be able to say that, however humble and unworthy, I was one of them, and one with them.

In order that any just conclusions may be inferred from the fact of our proposition, and the fact of our rejection, there must be considered also the terms in which the proposition was made, and the terms in which it was rejected.

#### TERMS OF UNION WITH THE OLD SCHOOL GENERAL ASSEMBLY, PROPOSED BY THE UNITED SYNOD.

“Whereas, This Synod believe that a union between Christian brethren who adopt the same standards of faith and practice, when it can be done without compromising vital principles, is always desirable; And whereas, the sentiment exists among members of our Churches that a union between this Synod and the Old-School General Assembly might be effected upon terms equally honorable to both parties.” \* \* \* The Committee is directed “to propose to the Committee to be appointed by the General Assembly, the following terms of union as indispensable to an honorable union on our part.”

“Fourth. Both bodies agree in declaring that slaveholding, or the relation of master and slave, cannot, in any case, be a bar to membership in the Church of Christ. And whilst they admit the right of the judicatories of the Church to take cognizance, in the way prescribed in the Constitution, of cruelties practiced in the relation, they hereby declare the opinion, that as the continuance or abolition of the system of slavery in this country belongs exclusively to the State, the discussion or agitation of slavery, further than pertains to the moral and religious duties arising from the relation, is inappropriate to the functions of Church judicatories.”—(See *Minutes of the United Synod*, pp. 14, 15.)

Observe, it is made “indispensable to an honorable union on our part” that

"both bodies agree in declaring that slaveholding cannot, in any case, be a bar to membership—that the abolition or continuance of the system of slavery in this country belongs exclusively to the State—and that the discussion or agitation of slavery is inappropriate to the functions of Church judicatories." If the Assembly agree to this, we are content, so far as the subject of slavery is concerned. But this is a *sine qua non*. The Synod expresses no opinion as to the probability of such a union. They say the sentiment exists among the members of their churches that such an union might be effected upon terms honorable to both parties. The sentiment prevailed extensively in both branches of the church. Several editors of Old School papers favored the movement, and the Richmond Central Presbyterian (O. S.) urged it in an editorial of three columns. These editors held up their church as a pattern of conservatism and true nationality, having, as they said, finally disposed of the subject of the slavery question in 1845, by an "action of the Assembly against abolition, so satisfactory that all secular papers at the South endorsed it; and all Southern Presbyterians, Old School, were satisfied with it"—that as to *eschewing the subject of slavery*, "the Old School, North and South, had occupied this very position for the last thirteen years"—that "since that time [1845] their Assembly has refused to take any other action," "And we know," adds one of the editors, "that there is a determination, North as well as South, among our ministers and churches, not to agitate this question, and not to change our position, because we do not believe slavery to be contrary to the Word of God, and hence an offence or sin, which the Assembly or any Church court has the power to reach. \* \* \* We hope yet to see at least all true Southern Presbyterians united. We need all the strength, and influence, and power that this union would give us."

It was due to those who entertained this sentiment that the practicability of the measure should be fairly tested. And it was especially due to the United Synod to protect itself by settling the question on actual experiment, and thus to secure the adhesion and hearty co-operation of its hesitating friends. But they could not compromise—they did not compromise "any vital principle." They could not go—they did not go into the presence of the Old School General Assembly without their principles, nor without their security. No union was proposed, and none could ever have been effected between the United Synod and the Old School General Assembly, which did not involve the full renunciation of all past acts, testimonies, and deliverances on the subject of slavery, by the latter, and a distinct recognition of our and the only true doctrine of non-intervention.

#### OLD SCHOOL "DELIVERANCE" ON UNION WITH THE UNITED SYNOD.

New Orleans, May 14th, 1858,

"In the matter of the proposals made to this General Assembly on behalf of the "United Synod of the Presbyterian Church," lately constituted in the State of Tennessee out of a portion of those New School Presbyterians, residing in several of the Southern States, who have seceded from that denomination at and after their General Assembly of 1857, this General Assembly makes the following deliverance:

1st. The Committee appointed by the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church has communicated to this Assembly the official action of said Synod, settling on their part the "terms of union deemed by them to be indispensable;" and the Assembly is informed through the public press of the contents of a paper adopted by that Synod, and called, "A Declaration of Principles."



In the judgment of this Assembly, those official papers do not afford a basis of conference upon which this Assembly is able to see that there is any prospect of advancing the interests of Christ's kingdom in general, or those of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, or those of the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church in particular.

2d. The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America has always received frankly and in Christian love, all churches, office-bearers, and private persons of all denominations, making application for admission into her communion, upon the single condition that they were like minded with herself. At this time ample provision is made, in her existing acts and ordinances, for the reception of all such into her communion, upon terms and by methods precisely equivalent, and where it is possible, identical, with those provided with regard to her own children, reared in her own bosom. Seeing that it was in a voluntary secession from the Presbyterian Church that the present difficulties of the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church had their origin, and that the door has always been open for the orderly return of such of those who left us as were like-minded with us; it can hardly be unexpected that we decline any official conference, based on terms which appear to us to involve a condemnation of ourselves, and a renunciation of the rich and peculiar favor of God upon us, in the very matters which led to their secession from our Church, twenty years ago.

3d. With reference to the recent schism in the New School Presbyterian body, this General Assembly does not see in that event, or in anything which has hitherto resulted from it, any call of Providence for the Presbyterian Church to take any new step whatever, either with the view of union, or that of closer intercourse than now exists with either of the parts into which that body is now divided. The subjects upon which the whole New School body differed from us, at the period of their separation from us, and the subject upon which the two very unequal portions of that body have recently separated from each other, are questions upon which we as a denomination are at peace, and with regard to the whole of which we see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith of our Church, or to enter into fruitless conferences."—(See *Minutes of Gen. Ass. of 1858*, pp. 289, 290.)

I give the above "deliverance" entire to the reader. It was written by Dr. Breckenridge, Professor of Theology in the Seminary at Danville, Ky., for the Committee who reported it, and it was adopted unanimously.

## INFLUENCE OF THE SLAVERY QUESTION IN REJECTING THE PROPOSITION OF THE UNITED SYNOD.

It remains now for us to inquire what influence "the position of the Old School Assembly on the subject of slavery" had in inducing that body to reject our terms of union.

I do not deny that other causes and other influences had their share of effect in bringing the Assembly to their conclusion. Indeed, this is clearly enough stated in their "deliverance." The matters referred to are of easy discussion on our part, and I should be glad of an opportunity of explaining and defending the United Synod's position, against all objectors, whenever and wherever the occasion and the circumstances shall justify it. But for the present, we must keep within the prescribed limits of the subject.

Our position on the subject of slavery and the right or authority of the church

to interfere with it was clearly defined, and could not have been misapprehended by the Assembly. The history of our sore trials and severe struggles in the maintenance of this position was before the world. The *fact* of our withdrawal from the New School Assembly *solely* "because of its repeated and unconstitutional action on slavery," and that our United Synod was organized, expressly "disclaiming all responsibility for, and endorsement of, the actions, resolutions and testimonies of past General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church," on this subject, was before the Assembly. *Security* in this behalf and safety and repose in this respect was distinctly stated as a condition "indispensable to an honorable union on our part."

Now note the terms of the Assembly's "deliverance" in reply. It is clearly admitted that an acceptance of the terms proposed would involve a *revision* of the "constant and unalterable faith" of their church on this subject. Nay, this is offered as a reason, excuse or apology for the refusal on their part. "The subject upon which the two very unequal portions of that body have recently separated from each other!" What subject? Slavery, of course, exclusively, confessedly, notoriously. The "subject" of slavery is a question, say the Old School Assembly, "upon which *we*, as a denomination, are at peace." Their faith on this subject is "constant and unalterable," and they "see no occasion to revise" it, as they concede they must do, in accepting the terms of union proposed by us. And so, for the reasons given, the Assembly declines the union.

I shall leave it to the reader to say whether I have fairly vindicated myself against the charge of inconsistency and a want of candor in proposing a union with the Old School. Whatever else I may have accomplished, or failed to accomplish, in this regard, I think every reader must perceive that I have added another staunch *column* in support of the facts and arguments heretofore offered on "the exact position of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery." Our views of the subject of slavery, and against the right of the church to meddle with it, were clearly stated. The reader knows what they are. The Assembly at New Orleans understood them. Their church had, from time to time during a period of seventy years, expressed its views on the subject of slavery. During all this period it had held and uttered substantially the same sentiments. And believing this uniform testimony to be true and capable of vindication from the word of God, they see no occasion—they cannot afford—it is not worth while to enter into any conference with us in reference to union. Any such conference would be "*fruitless*," because they believe that slavery "is a *blot on our holy religion*," and their faith on this subject is constant and unalterable. Is not the reason offered for declining the proposed conference with us the strongest kind of showing of their own position on the subject of slavery?

## INFLUENCE OF ABOLITIONISM ON THE QUESTION OF UNION. OPINIONS OF OLD SCHOOL EDITORS AND LEADERS.

"In my discussions thus far, I have relied on the official and duly authorized public documents of the Old School General Assembly itself, as the most reliable and satisfactory evidence of their position on the subject of slavery. When I have the acts, testimonies and deliverances of the *body* itself, I am not so much concerned to know the sentiments or opinions of individual members of that body. So also in respect to the influence of the slavery question in the rejection of our

proposition of union by the Old School Assembly in New Orleans; I have relied chiefly on the terms of the Assembly's own "deliverance." I believe I have been able thus to make the case sufficiently plain and the proof sufficiently clear to most minds.

But there is a class of minds whose faith is greatly strengthened by individual testimony, and the weight of an individual name. They would be glad to know something of the private or personal sentiments of A, B, or C, on a given subject, so as to be able to estimate fairly his vote or action on that subject. Besides, there is a pretty general belief in the truth of the old adage, "Corporations have no souls." A hundred men will sometimes vote *Aye*, or acquiesce and give silent consent, to a resolution or a series of statements, in an *assembly*, while each one of the hundred would be ashamed to affix his individual signature to such resolution or series of statements.

It is a question of some value, therefore, and I am not at all surprised at the curiosity, which exists in certain quarters, to know somewhat in detail the antecedents and surroundings of this act of rejection on the part of the Old School Assembly. And I do not believe I can do full justice to the subject, or meet the just expectations of the public, without according to certain *oracles* of the church their due share of credit in giving shape and character to the action of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the slavery question generally, and on the union question in particular. This course of inquiry will lead to some queer, and it may be, astounding developments, while it will enable the reader to determine for himself whether or not my interpretation of the Old School deliverances on slavery is supported by Old School *authority*.

#### MR. MARSHALL'S INTERROGATORIES.

The Rev. M. M. MARSHALL, of Fayetteville, Tennessee, addressed a circular letter, dated July 17, 1857, just forty days before the meeting of the Convention at Richmond, to several leading men of the Old School Presbyterian Church, making certain inquiries as to the prospects and probability of a union between them and the Southern churches which had renounced the jurisdiction of the New School Presbyterian Assembly. The following is what relates to slavery in that letter of inquiry:

"Do you consider the Act of 1818 on slavery still binding upon the members of the Church, or do you consider it repealed by any subsequent Act? Do you think that your Church would object to adopting the position of the South on slavery, as read to the Cleveland Assembly by Rev. T. H. Cleland? Do you not think that this is the true Southern position, and that it is sustained by the Bible?"

#### ANSWER BY THE ST. LOUIS PRESBYTERIAN.

DR. RICE, in the St. Louis Presbyterian of August 6th, makes the following editorial reply. I give it entire:

"The action of the Assembly of 1818 on slavery consists of several parts. It contains an expression of the views of that body on the general subject. It contains several recommendations. It contains two or three injunctions. No statement of views by any General Assembly, on any subject, is binding on the Church, unless it be an official interpretation of some part of the Confession of Faith or Book of Discipline. Yet an expression of views by a General Assembly on a subject of general interest, if acquiesced in by the Church, is very properly

regarded as in accordance with the conviction of the great body of the Church. Recommendations, of course, are never *binding*. The injunctions in that document are still binding, and we should be sorry to see them changed or annulled. No subsequent action of any Assembly has repealed that of 1818. How far every sentiment it expresses is held in the Church, it would be difficult to determine. For ourself we are free to say that we cordially approve of the entire document, as it has always been understood by the Church.

"We do not believe the General Assembly could be induced to adopt any paper different from, or in addition to those already adopted. We desire to know nothing of the 'Southern position,' or of the Northern position. Our Church has already expressed her understanding as to the teaching of the Bible on the subject of slavery. There is no ambiguity in her language, and therefore there can be no good reason why another expression of views should be given. Our brethren can examine our position, and determine for themselves whether they agree with us."

#### PRESBYTERIAN HERALD'S ANSWER.

The Rev. Dr. HILL, in the Presbyterian Herald, Louisville, Kentucky, July 24, 1857, replies editorially to Mr. Marshall, as follows :

"In reference to the subject of slavery, the General Assembly have passed various acts. None of them have ever been repealed. The previous Acts of the Assembly were explained by that of 1845, which is the latest deliverance of the Assembly on the subject. By that action the great mass of our ministers, both North and South, are willing to abide. There are a few exceptions to this rule, but they are very few. We do not desire to take any further action on the subject at present, whilst the public mind is so agitated with it. Consequently, I do not suppose that the Assembly would adopt the paper presented by Mr. Cleland to the New School Assembly, or in fact any other. The disposition of the Assembly, as I interpret it, is to frown upon all agitation of the subject, from any quarter, and to go steadily forward in the great work of preaching Christ and him crucified, to both masters and servants, knowing that if they can both be brought to be true Christians, all that is evil in the relation that exists between them will be peacefully removed. The introduction of that paper, or any other, would scarcely meet with favor with the Assembly just now. They will not take the ground that they will never discuss the subject, or take any further action upon it, but simply that they will not do so now; as no further action is like to result in good in the present state of public feeling. If they were to resolve that they would never act on the subject, they would feel that they had put a padlock on their mouths, and bartered away the liberties of speech, which *Presbyterians* are not willing to give up."

"Bartered away the liberty of speech!" Great stars! Would the Assembly feel that they were *giving up* their liberty of speech, if they should resolve not to slander their brethren? Is it putting a *padlock* on their mouths to say they intend to obey the Divine law—Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor? May a witness in court refuse to take an oath to speak the truth, because that would be *locking up* his lips against falsehood? Or may the thief refuse to promise that he will "*steal no more*," because that would be putting manacles on his hands, and *giving up* his liberty? Is this the liberty that our Presbyterian fathers fought for, and died for?

Damnosa quid non imminuit dies!  
 Aetas parentum, pejor avis, tulit  
 Nos nequiores, mox daturos  
 Progeniem vitiosiore.

The editor seems quite willing to *lock* his lips against the action of the Assembly of 1846! He takes the *liberty* of stating that the action of 1845 "is the latest deliverance of the Assembly on the subject"—and that "by that action, the great mass of [their] ministers, both North and South are willing to abide!"

#### THE (PHILADELPHIA) PRESBYTERIAN'S ANSWER.

"The Act of 1818 has never been repealed: the deliverance of 1845, however, is to be considered, we presume, as an interpretation of that Act, and the two in conjunction express the mind of the Church on the subject. These are legislative enactments, however, and are no part of the Constitution.

"We do not believe that our Church would be willing to adopt any further declarations on the subject of slavery. Her views are already on record, to be known and read of all men. If it be objected that these Acts are liable to be misinterpreted, we reply that the same thing would probably be true as to any other deliverance the Assembly could agree upon.—*August 8th, 1857.*"

#### REPLY OF PRESBYTERIAN OF THE WEST—DR. MONFORT.

"7. 'Binding?' Yes, sir, 'binding!' and if all the New School men in the South were to be added to us, there would not be the least prospect of repealing it.

"8. We have carefully read Mr. Cleland's paper. It is in direct opposition to the action of 1818. It contains a new doctrine. It opposes the well-settled views of our Church, and the teachings of the Bible.

"We answer these questions in all frankness, and we are quite confident that we express the opinions of a large majority of our Church in the North. It is greatly to be hoped that the Southern New School will set up for themselves. Their union with us, we fear, would divide our Church. Not that a part of our Church in the North would secede, but a part of our Church in the South would agitate and express opinions, which would lead to action that would cause pro-slavery men to secede. If Southern New School men wish to produce this result, they will seek a connection with us. If Southern, or any other Old School men wish this result, let them encourage the union. We must oppose it to the end."—*August 6th, 1857.*

#### DR. BRECKENRIDGE'S ANSWER.

Dr. Breckenridge, Professor of Theology in the Seminary at Danville, in a letter dated July 28, 1857, answers Mr. Marshall, through the public prints, like himself. The following is all that relates to the subject of slavery:

"So far as relates to the subject of slavery, our body is quiet, homogeneous and of one mind; and so far from desiring any one to come amongst us to make disturbance on any side of that dangerous question, we would by no means allow it if we could help it."

The reader is respectfully requested to note the *dates* of each of these replies. The Convention in Richmond was August 27. All these documents, and others of a similar character, were read before the Convention.

#### THE PRESBYTERIAN BANNER.

The *Presbyterian Banner and Advocate*, of Pittsburg, Pa., Sept. 19, 1857,—after the Richmond Convention, and commenting at great length upon its proceedings, hold the following language on the subject under consideration:

"The sentiments expressed [in the Convention on the slavery question,] are by no means those of the Old School General Assembly; and if, having united

with us, they should find many to side with them and should attempt to press their views upon the body, there would soon be another division of the Church. Better then, a hundred fold better, that we abide as we are. We are now peaceful and united, North, South and middle; and there is no symptom of turmoil amongst us, and no cause for fear, unless we shall *import a virus*."

"We think from the present aspect of affairs that there is but very little likelihood that any serious effort will be made to accomplish a general union. It is true that the supplementary resolution introduced near the close of the meeting, and which passed almost unanimously, looks that way." [Here follows the resolution of the Convention proposing a conference with the Old School.]

"We do not anticipate much from this. The discussions show clearly that two things were aimed at in its adoption; one was to induce ministers and people who were inclined to come to us at once, to hold on there, and be organized and committed; and the other was to assume the appearance of a desire to unite, aware that the terms proposed could not be accepted, and hence, that we should be put in the wrong before their people, and before the Christian public.

"There is in our Church great unanimity of sentiment; and therewith much fixedness of purpose to neither agitate nor be agitated. We cordially thank Drs. Ross, Boyd, and their compeers, for their outspoken honesty, by which we hope to be saved from the absorption of an element of discord. We now know what they are: and know also how they esteem us. The people may know now what their leaders hold to, and whither they are tending, and they can hence conclude whether they will still follow on in devious paths, or will return by an open door into a Church whose principles are fixed by unmistakable records, and expounded by long, harmonious and edifying practice. Any who shall *now* go with them, we may be sure are not of us."

#### THE SYNOD OF OHIO.

The Synod of Ohio, October, 1857, adopted the following:

"Whereas, The ministers and elders who seceded from the New School Assembly at Cleveland, in May last, appointed a Convention, which was held at Richmond, in the month of August, resolved to constitute a General Synod, to meet in Knoxville, Tennessee, in May next; and instructed the Synod thus constituted, to propose a union with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. Therefore,

"Resolved, By the Synod of Ohio, that the General Assembly be, and hereby is earnestly requested not to entertain or consider any such proposal from the Synod thus formed, for the following reasons:

"1. It is doubtful whether the General Assembly has the Constitutional power to form such a union, unless authorized to perform such act by the Presbyteries.

"2. In the aforesaid Convention, leading men avowed their belief of those doctrines which were the reasons of the exclusion of the New School party; condemned the separation in 1838, as well as the excommunicating acts of 1837; declared against the rule which requires the examination of members, on their admission to the Presbyteries; and avowed opinions respecting slavery, which are contrary to the uniform testimony of the General Assembly, as that it is morally right—is a divine ordinance—and that it is not cognizable by the Church. Thus, throughout, directly opposing the doctrine and policy of the Church: and in all this they were not opposed by the Convention, or its members."

This Synod (of Ohio,) at the same session, adopted the following resolutions. I give them that the reader may learn something more of the sentiments of these men, who, though they were neither seen or heard of, on the streets of New

Orleans, nor in the columns of the city press, were, nevertheless present, by their commissioners and their records in the General Assembly.

*"Resolved,* That the decisions and declarations of the General Assembly of our Church respecting slavery, have been uniform and consistent, when rightly understood, from the beginning until now.

*"Resolved,* That this Synod would refer those desiring information, to the action of the General Assembly of A. D. 1818, on the subject of slavery, as a comprehensive summary of their views.

*"Resolved,* That we and all christians ought to pray for the removal of all bondage and oppression, and to employ every right and practicable means of producing a result so desirable."

The editor of the St. Louis Presbyterian, on introducing the above to his columns, says, "Their silence in regard to the deliverance of the General Assembly of 1845 is significant."

Significant? Yes, and so is the fact of their *earnest request*, and their "following reasons," sent down to the General Assembly, "not to entertain or consider any such proposal from the United Synod." I know not how many other Northern Synods protested beforehand, and were busy with their *reasons* in New Orleans, menacing the *peace* of the great *like-minded*, if they should dare to "entertain or consider any such proposal." But this I do know, that not one of a hundred of my Southern readers would ever have heard of this interdiction from the Synod of Ohio, if I had not got hold of it by means that are not within the ordinary reach of our people.

"Their silence in regard to the deliverance of the General Assembly of 1845 is significant." Significant! Yes, and so is the silence of the editor of the Presbyterian Herald on the action of the Assembly of 1846, significant! And—for I may as well say it now as hereafter—the editor of the Presbyterian Herald is not the only Old School Presbyterian editor who has put a *padlock on his mouth* in regard to the action of the Assembly of 1846. The editors of the Central Presbyterian and of the True Witness are in the same box.

#### CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN PADLOCKED.

In a long editorial of nearly three columns, July 11, 1857, under the head of "Our Position," laboring this very question of union, the Richmond *Central Presbyterian* has the following :

"The only reason assigned against such a reunion as is proposed, is, that the Old School is also so tainted with abolitionism, that it is not worth while to go there for peace on that subject. Now let us, brethren, look calmly and practically at this. Consider that the action of our Assembly against abolitionism was so satisfactory that *all* secular papers at the South endorsed it; and all Southern Presbyterians, Old School, were satisfied with it. Consider that this action was adopted by an overwhelming majority, embracing every vote except about *thirteen*. Consider that from that day [May, 1845,] to this, during the sessions of twelve Assemblies, *not one* instance of agitation has occurred in our meetings; and that in the last Assembly, amidst all the political storms, elsewhere over the land, in our Assembly there was yet *perfect peace*. Now, is not this enough?"

Enough! Yes, quite enough, unless you can give us something more satisfactory than "the action of your Assembly of 1845 *against* Abolitionism, so satisfactory to all secular Editors at the South." Enough! No,—not quite enough, unless

you can take the *liberty* to pull off the padlock from your lips, and out with the action of all actions—the action of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly of 1846.

### THE TRUE WITNESS PADLOCKED.

*The Editor of the True Witness*, June 26, 1856, has a leader of nearly three columns on “the Action of the New and Old School Assemblies on slavery.” After expressing his “sincere desire for a union in one denomination of all sound conservative Presbyterians,” and after complaining of the injustice done to the Old School in the allegation of the Southern New School manifesto, that they were no better than they should be on the subject of slavery, he proceeds to give and to contrast “the action of both Assemblies.” The following is the whole of his full and impartial expose of the Old School position on this subject.

“Let us now look at the *action* and *position* of our Assembly in reference to slavery—and we shall state it fully and impartially: After the separation in '87 and '88, some of our Northern Presbyteries desired the Old School Church to declare their position in reference to the position of slavery. For several years the Assembly refused to admit the subject, but finally concluded that they would meet the question and declare to the Church and the world their position. Hence it was generally understood that the Assembly of 1845 would take action on this subject, and accordingly memorials and petitions were sent to the Assembly that was to meet that year in Cincinnati. The third day a committee of five—two Southern and three Northern men—was appointed, to whom all these papers were referred. There was great excitement in Cincinnati, and among a large number of abolitionists who had come to exert if possible, an outside pressure—we speak from our own observation, when we say every outside influence that they could arouse was brought to bear upon the Assembly—and upon the day the report was made the house was filled to overflowing. Yet notwithstanding all this, the committee, after stating that the *Church of Christ was a spiritual body, whose jurisdiction extends only to the religious faith and moral conduct of its members; and that it could not legislate where Christ had not legislated: and that it could not denounce slavery without charging the Apostles with conniving at sin.* They say, ‘In view of the above stated principles and facts.’

“Resolved, 1st. That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was originally organized, and has since continued the bond of union in the Church, upon the conceded principle that the existence of domestic slavery, under the circumstances in which it is found in the Southern portion of our country, is no bar to christian communion.

“Resolved, 2d. That the petitions that ask the Assembly to make the holding of slaves in itself, a matter of discipline, do virtually require this judicatory to dissolve itself, and abandon the organization under which, by the divine blessing, it has so long prospered. The tendency is evidently to separate the Northern from the Southern portion of our Church; a result which every good citizen must deplore as tending to the dissolution of the union of our beloved country, and which every enlightened man will oppose as bringing about a ruinous and unnecessary schism between brethren who maintain a common faith.”

“These resolutions were adopted by a vote of 168 to 13. Thus showing that the abolition element in our Assembly at that time was very weak, most of whom have since left. *This is the strong testimony that we have borne against slavery.* Since that time our Assembly has refused to take any other action; and we know that there is a determination, North as well as South, among our ministers and churches, not to agitate this question, and not to change our



*position*, because we do not believe slavery to be 'contrary to the word of God;' and hence an 'offence' or sin which the Assembly, or any other church court, has the power to reach—Had the Southern delegates to the New School Assembly examined our record they would not, they could not, have uttered the charges made against us in their *manifesto*.—And hence we think that they have spoken hastily, under the impulse of wrong impressions. And we cannot believe that they have given the views or the intentions of their churches South. And we hope yet to see at least all true Southern *Presbyterians*, united as a band of brethren in the great work of our mission. We need all the strength and influence, and power that this union would give us. We regret to see that there are a *few* in both schools who seemed to be still governed by their prejudices; but we rejoice at the same time in the assurances we have, that, with the great mass in both schools, there is no such feeling; and our earnest desire and prayer is, that the time may soon come when those who are one in doctrine, one in feeling, and one in purpose, will be united in laboring to promote the interest of that kingdom which is not of this world."

Thus the True Witness conspires with his two *confriars* of the Presbyterian Herald and the Central Presbyterian, and this fraternity of Old School *Presbyterian* editors, who cannot afford to barter away their liberty of speech or to give up their privilege of acting, testifying, and delivering on the subject of slavery, *put padlocks on their mouths*, and never "tell to the world" that there ever was such an action of the Old School General Assembly as that of 1846! The reader of these Presbyterian prints—unless they have looked to other sources of information—have never suspected that the Assembly of 1846 ever made the slightest allusion to the subject. Can that be a *true* witness who keeps back part of the truth?

I have heretofore said (column No. 2,) that the records of the Old School General Assembly on the subject of slavery have been *withheld* from this community—that when published in part for several years past, *essential facts* of the record have been kept in the back ground as unsuited to the gaze of Southern eyes. The *proof* is now before the reader. These editors say: The action of 1845 "is the latest deliverance of the Assembly on the subject"—that "since that time our Assembly has refused to take any other action"—And that "from that day to this, *not one* instance of agitation has occurred in our meetings." The Presbyterian Herald says that "by that action, [1845] the great body of our ministers, North and South, are willing to abide." The Central Presbyterian says "All Southern Presbyterians, Old School, were satisfied with it." And the True Witness says: "The question of slavery in our church is settled on a purely National and Scriptural basis, and there we intend to leave it."—*True Witness*, Sept. 10, 1857.

Not one of these papers makes mention of the Assembly of 1846 any more than if there had never been a meeting of that body that year. My opportunities for careful observation have not been so complete in respect to two of these papers in question, and I cannot say positively that they have *never*, at any time, alluded to the resolutions of 1846. But I defy any man to point to a sentence or a syllable in the columns of the True Witness, from No. 1, of Vol. 1, to the last weekly issue of that paper, which would lead its readers to *suspect* that the Old School General Assembly has given this subject one moment's consideration since 1845! Silence is the best comment I can offer on such facts as these!

There need be no attempt at playing off here upon the word *action*, or *deliverance*. Such an attempt would scandalize all honest men. Words are words, and

actions are actions, either with or without a name. The action of 1846 is the action of all actions of the Old School Assembly on the subject of slavery. The Assembly of 1845 spoke for itself alone, and made no allusion to the past. The Assembly of 1846 spoke for itself, for 1845, for 1818, and for all past Assemblies. Reaching back over 1845 and 1818, and down through a period of "nearly sixty years," it solemnly and deliberately embraced and endorsed them all as "substantially the same, true, and capable of vindication from the word of God."

#### DR. BRECKENRIDGE'S POSITION, PRINCIPLES AND INFLUENCE.

We have surveyed the surrounding country long enough, and with sufficient care; we have taken our field notes, now let us go into the City, and see who is presiding at this long expected deliverance—May 14, 1858, draws near.

Rev. Drs. Van Rensselaer and Palmer, and Rev. Mr. Cunningham are the Committee. But Dr. Breckenridge had kindly prepared the report for them; and the Assembly's *Deliverance* was ready before the committee was appointed, and probably before the Assembly met.

Longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses.

No matter about the opinions of the *quasi* committee. Those who are silly enough to feel any concern in this direction may find Dr. Van Rensselaer's position, clearly stated and argued at great length in his controversy with Dr. Armstrong, of Richmond, in the Presbyterian Magazine, January, 1858, as follows: "*Slaveholding is not necessarily, and in all circumstances, sinful.*"

Dr. Breckenridge made the *deliverance*, and the Assembly adopted it. His influence in that body is universally conceded. I received a letter during the session of the Assembly from one of the oldest, most pious, most learned and most venerable Doctors of Divinity then in the body, himself a member, who, writing of this very question of *union*, pens these very strong words, "*Breckenridge is omnipotent in the Assembly.*"

It becomes a question of some value to know what are the sentiments of the man who was "omnipotent in the Assembly" at New Orleans. I know not that he is also *omniscient*; but *immutability* is his darling attribute. Constant and unalterable as the faith of his church, he believes what the church believes, and the church believes what he believes. Dr. Breckenridge has occupied no uncertain or equivocal position on this subject. Ample evidence of his sentiments in regard to slavery has been given in his speeches and writings. And, as he seems never to have *changed*, the date of the testimony is of no importance.

In the "*African Repository*" for 1833, Dr. Breckenridge gives his readers a *portrait* of slavery, from which I select the following:

"What is slavery? We reply, it is that condition, enforced by the laws of one half the States of this confederacy, in which one portion of the community, called masters, is allowed such power over another portion, called slaves, as *First*.—To deprive them of the entire earnings of their own labor, except only so much as is necessary to continue labor itself by continuing healthful existence, thus committing clear robbery. *Second*.—To reduce them to the necessity of universal concubinage, &c."

He then proceeds to comment on master's giving their servants that which is just and equal, and says:

"Just and equal! What care I whether my pockets are picked, or the proceeds of my labor taken from me? What matters it whether my horse is stolen,

or the value of him in my labor taken from me? Do we talk of violating the rights of masters, and depriving them of their property in their slaves? And will some one tell us if there be anything in which a man has, or can have, so perfect a right of property, as in his own limbs, bones and sinews? Out upon such folly! The man who cannot see that involuntary domestic slavery, as it exists among us, is founded upon the principle of taking by force that which is not ours, has simply no moral sense."

This is the Theological Master, "constant, unalterable and omnipotent," who is to have the training of our young preachers at Danville, and who is to instil into them a "moral sense," and send them down to their hearths and their homes throughout the South-West, duly penitent for the *robberies committed* in their youth upon the "limbs, bones and sinews" of their shoe-blacks and washer-women, and ready to pray and exhort or if need be, to denounce their fathers and mothers as *pick-pockets* and *horse-thieves*! This is the *Keeper* of "the school of the prophets," for the support of which, thousands upon thousands of dollars are annually demanded and annually collected from honest, innocent and unsuspecting Old School Presbyterians, and others, of the South-West. Must not every drop of honest blood in our veins boil as in a caldron, every bosom burn with righteous indignation, and "both the ears of every one that heareth, it tingle" at the foul charge of "committing clear robbery" thus boldly made and impudently thrust into the teeth of every slaveholder by this intolerant and intolerable ecclesiastical demagogue!

There is no use in whining, under cover of a long face, dodging behind a sad countenance, or bristling up with a simulation of self-satisfaction and defiance, in the vain pretense that these are not Dr. Breckenridge's sentiments *now*. They *are* his sentiments to-day. If not, why has he not done himself the justice publicly to retract them? Such sentiments cannot die out of themselves. They demand, and must have, an open public retraction, without equivocation or evasion. No such retraction or disavowal of these sentiments has ever been made to the public.—And to-day—while the slaveholders of the South-West are paying over heavy subscriptions to the Theological Seminary at Danville—Robert J. Breckenridge, who is fed and furnished from their bounty, denounces them all as a set of *pick-pockets* and *horse-thieves* "committing clear robbery" upon the "limbs, bones and sinews" of that "portion of the community called slaves!"

But let us hear this ecclesiarch a little further, and on the position—"the constant and unalterable faith of [his] church."

Dr. Breckenridge had a discussion with the celebrated Mr. George Thompson in Glasgow, Scotland, in which Mr. Thompson quoted upon him the very passage which I have given above. In accepting Mr. Thompson's challenge, Dr. Breckenridge said:

"I feel myself encompassed with many difficulties: for some may consider me as defending the institution of slavery, whereas I myself believe it to be contrary to the spirit of the gospel and the natural rights of man."

He quoted from the action of the General Assembly of 1818, declaring "the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human race by another a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ." He also quoted the passage in which the Assembly say "It is manifestly the duty of all christians, to use their honest, earnest and unwearied

endeavors as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and, if possible, throughout the world." After quoting these passages, Dr. Breckenridge then adds :

"If he had expressed sentiments differing from these ; or if he had inculcated as the principles of his brethren, any thing differing from these just and noble sentiments, let the blame be upon his bare head. These sentiments they had held from a period, to which the memory of man runneth not to the contrary. These are the principles of the Presbyterian Church of the United States—She has risen with them ; she will stand, or if it be God's will, she will fall with them."

Just so—"substantially the same" yesterday, to-day, and to morrow, the *body* of the great like-minded changeth not. Much less doth the "omnipotent" Head!

But I must close. This is the man who *delivered* the Old School Presbyterian Assembly in New Orleans, of the answer to the United Synod's proposal for union, May 14, 1858. It was too much to expect that he would surrender or revise "the principles of his brethren, the principles of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, the sentiments they had held from a period to which the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, the uniform, constant and unalterable faith of [his] Church" on the subject of slavery. What that faith is—what those sentiments and principles are—my readers now know full well. There surely is not left in any serious mind a solitary "loop to hang a doubt upon." And because that faith and these sentiments and principles are what they are, there could be no "honorable," or honest "union on our part." "O my soul ! come not thou into their secret ! To their Assembly, mine honor, be not thou united !"

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### SPECIMEN OF OLD SCHOOL TACTICS.

To all honest and honorable men, lovers of truth,, to whom these presents may come, this column is most respectfully dedicated by

THE AUTHOR.

JACKSON, Miss., Jan. 15th, 1859.

*"Past all shame, so past all truth."*

*The Presbyterian*, published in Philadelphia and New York, in the issue bearing date December 25th, has an editorial notice of my *columns*. This is the great metropolitan organ of Old Schoolism in the United States. In the same issue, the editor claims that the *Presbyterian*, now in its twenty-ninth year, is one of the "oldest and most extensively circulated religious journals in the country."

I give this *editorial* entire to my readers, because I want every honest and honorable man and every christian gentleman to see for himself the latest specimen of Old School tactics on the slavery question. The coarse vulgarity, uncharitable imputations, abusive epithets, hard names, and strange disregard of publicly recorded facts, evinced in this article—while they furnish mournful

evidence of a low style and sinking standard of editorial etiquette and editorial candor—can perhaps be accounted for only upon the supposition that “the iron of the argument having entered his soul,” the editor fell into a furious fret, and forgot the decencies common among gentlemen and christians, and in his haste mislaid or misapplied his *balance* of truth.

### A CHURCH IN UNITY.(a)

A certain Mr. A. Newton, a gentleman of whom we have no personal knowledge, but who, we see by an advertisement, is the teacher of a school in Jackson, Mississippi, and who, we presume, is a minister of Mr. Frederick Ross's “relic” church in Tennessee,(b) has made a fierce attack on the Old-School Presbyterian Church, in two of the secular papers of Mississippi, one published in Paulding and the other in Jackson.(c) The attack is eminently malicious and unprovoked,(d) the author frankly acknowledging that he “hates” Old-School Presbyterianism, and his only ostensible object being to create a jealous and suspicious feeling in the South against the object of his “hate.”(e) His charge is, that this Church is pre-eminently an abolition institution,(f) and his proof of the charge an array of all the General Assembly's deliverances on the subject of slavery, with his own peculiar glosses.(g) In order to “begin with the beginning,” he goes back as far as the year 1787, when the subject was first broached, and follows up the act then passed with some confirmatory ones of the following years. Mr. Newton, through a convenient lapse of the memory, if not of moral honesty, forgets to tell his readers.

1st. That these acts were not those of a *part* of the Church, but of the whole Church as an undivided unit.(h) No separation had then taken place between the Old and New-Schools, and the party to which he belongs was just as responsible for them as that now designated Old-School. Now, we ask Mr. Newton if he has ever repented of his share of the sin,(i) or has he ever urged his New-School friends formally to discountenance or abrogate these acts. As a *particeps criminis* his party should first purge themselves before they can fairly maintain such a charge against others. It may be very convenient for him to charge Old-Schoolism with what he regards as a crime, without informing his readers that it was a thing enacted some half a century before Old-Schoolism, as now known, had an existence.(j)

2d. His memory conveniently fails him in another particular. His readers are left in ignorance of the fact, that what he regards as the abolition acts, were passed under very different circumstances from those which now exist, and that they had the *full concurrence of the Church South*.(k) Our southern brethren have never failed of being tenacious of their rights, and if they had regarded these acts as an invasion of them, under the circumstances then existing, we should certainly have heard of a protest at least, if not a secession.(l) These acts, which are now represented by Mr. Newton as so unmitigatedly “abolition,” are as fairly chargeable on the South as the North, and as much New-School as Old.(m)

3d. Mr. Newton has also forgotten to enlighten his reader on another point, viz : that while he is proving to the people of Mississippi that the Old-School Presbyterian Church is rabidly abolition, the New-School Presbyterian Church at the North, with which he fraternizes, are just as zealous in demonstrating that the said Old-School Church is as obstinately pro-slavery. Poor Church? it is in the same sad plight as the poor fellow in revolutionary times, who having just escaped the noose under the charge of one party of being a Tory, was afterwards brought to the halter, because he was not a Tory. Now we take it to be self-evident, that the charge against our church must fall to the ground on one side

or the other—it cannot be both abolition and pro-slavery at one and the same time.(n)

4th. A fourth lapse of memory on the part of this gentleman is this—and it is a pity his readers did not know it—that the Old-School Presbyterian Church is one of the largest and most harmonious bodies in the country ;(o) that from year to year its General Assembly is composed of the strongest men from the South and the North, and that they work together like “brethren ;” and that they are held together by a noble spirit of conversation.(p) While the Methodists are split into Northern and Southern sections ; and while the New-School Presbyterians have been rent asunder by the question of slavery, the Old-School go on in the even tenor of their way, knowing no North no South, with undivided faith and affection.(q) This is the sore point with poor Mr. Newton. He knows these facts and he grieves over them.(r) The secret desire of his heart, as fully revealed in his fulminations, is that the Old-School will split. If he could insert a wedge that would accomplish this, he would be most happy.(s) His language, would he give it utterance, would be something like this, “Brethren of the New-School North, assail the Old-School Presbyterian Church for its pro-slavery tendencies, and I, at the South, will assault it for its abolition proclivities, and thus between us, we may succeed in rending it asunder.”(t) We would respectfully ask this gentleman if he has ever heard of the man who in his overheated zeal, run his head against a stone wall ? If he has not, perhaps he will know more about it when his experience is matured.(u)

(a) “A church in unity !” Exactly. The great “like-minded, constant and unalterable !” All “quiet and of one mind”—all at peace, “perfect peace,” says the Central Presbyterian. All “peaceful and united, North, South and Middle, and there is no symptom of turmoil amongst us and no cause for fear, unless we shall import a virus,” says the Presbyterian Banner.

Every man who reads, and who cares to inform himself at all upon the subject, knows well that this is not true. I have not cared to show, nor have I pretended to show, that such is not the fact. It has been no part of my purpose. And yet my readers have the evidence incidentally furnished again and again from the quotations in my columns that such is not the fact. The Synod of Ohio point to the action of the Assembly of 1818 for their views of slavery. The Presbyterian Herald, The Central Presbyterian, and the True Witness point to that of 1845. The Presbyterian of the West says that “The church holds [slavery] and we hold it to be, *per se*, in itself, necessarily a heinous and scandalous sin.” The True Witness says “We do not believe slavery to be contrary to the word of God, and hence an offence or sin which the Assembly or any other church court has the power to reach.” The St. Louis Presbyterian says “It is evidently the design of Drs. Monfort, McMaster and Thomas to form a thoroughly Abolitionist Seminary in the North-west, and there to train young men to become agitators and destroyers of the peace of the church.”

This is a church in unity ! This is the “homogeneous, like-minded Old School Presbyterian Church !” The constant cry is *Laus nobis* !

(b) “A certain Mr. A. Newton, whom we presume is a minister of Mr. Frederick Ross’s ‘relie’ church in Tennessee.” I know of no such church. Dr. Ross is a gentleman and a christian minister of great learning, devoted piety, and surpassing eloquence, a member of our United Synod, and the very highly esteemed and honored pastor of one of the largest and most intelligent congregations in the South-west, (Huntsville, Ala.) His age and long life of service to the cause of Christ, and his well-known, Union-wide reputation for polite, unassuming,

dignified and uniformly courteous; gentlemanly bearing in social intercourse, should have shielded him from this sly, pot-house fling of the Metropolitan Presbyterian.

(c) "A fierce attack on the Old School Presbyterian Church in two of the secular papers of Mississippi, one published in Paulding, and the other in Jackson."

I have published nothing on the Old School Presbyterian Church except in the *Eagle of the South*. Is the publishing of the records, the acts, testimonies and deliverances, of a church a "fierce attack" on that church?

(d) "The attack is eminently malicious and unprovoked." *Eminently* malicious! Malicious would be bad enough; but *eminently* malicious is too bad. I thank God, neither my body nor soul is in the hands or at the disposal of this *fierce* Metropolitan. If they were, both would doubtless be burned. I feel thankful that he is not my *final* judge.

The attack—if the editor must so denominate it—is *not* unprovoked. The *readers* of my *columns* shall decide between him and me. No man, or body of men, has been more misrepresented or better abused, or more patient under abuse, than myself and those with whom I am ecclesiastically associated. *Ab uno disce omnes*:

The New Orleans True Witness of August 14th, *opened a battery* upon us—I use his own words—in a style of warfare, and using weapons, more befitting the dance-house or the gambler's den than the *sanctum* of a christian editor. When my eye first fell upon this editorial, each particular hair upon my head was moved by the amazement which stirred my bosom. I could not believe, and I did not believe that such an article could emanate either from the brain or the heart of the editor himself. I so expressed myself to friends around me at the moment. I hoped that, being temporarily absent, some light-headed novice having charge of the office, and having more zeal than knowledge, had perpetrated this *attack*; and that on the editor's return, he would disown the same, and make due amends. The editor *was* absent; but on his return, to my surprise, he recorded his hearty approval of the conduct of the paper during his absence, and thus endorsed the same and made it his own.

On the 20th of August, I addressed a letter to the editor. He gave me no attention whatever. I have evidence that he received my letter, and read it, in due time. I waited more than a month, and on the 26th of September published it in the *Eagle of the South*. This letter to the editor of the True Witness constitutes the introduction to my *columns*. In this letter I said:

"You have betaken yourself to the construction of a battery of *carnal weapons*, such as the following: *Trick, prejudices of the South, calumny, virulence, trouble in Israel, Mississippi calumniator, intriguing divine, poisonous reptile, thrusting fangs, &c., &c.* I know not who is thus *battered* as 'an intriguing divine, and Mississippi calumniator,' and I perhaps have no right to complain of the style of warfare adopted, or of the character of the weapons used. But as a member of the Mississippi Synod (N. S.) in connection with the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church, South, I beg leave to *complain* of this sweeping strike at every minister in our Synod. In withholding the name of the divine against whom your battery is *designedly* directed, you really subject us all to the suspicion of your readers, Justice, as well as charity, demands a different course."—*Eagle of the South*, Sep. 25. (P. 5.)

In my *column*, No. 2, in the *Eagle* of October 27th, p. 13, I said:

"In giving these facts to the public, I have *attacked* no body—much less have I *attacked* my neighbors and friends, whose Southern hearts, I trust I know how to measure, and whose Southern hearths I would peril my life to defend.— We have been attacked, fiercely and furiously *attacked*—and denounced as *calumniators* and *troublers*; because in justification of our own position, standing apart from the Old-School Assembly, we have deemed *their* position unsatisfactory and unsafe, and have made it an indispensable condition of our union with them, that they should right themselves on the subject of slavery."

The reader of my *columns* in the *Eagle* of the South knows all these facts. The reviewers who never read may not. I reproduce these extracts, only in the apprehension that this paper may fall into the hands of some who have not had an opportunity of reading my columns. I would copy the entire article of attack—the whole "*battery*" from the True Witness of August 14th, but my quotations from it, and my interpretation of it, have not been questioned, and will not be.

How can the editor of the Presbyterian, with all these published facts before his eyes, and the *battery* of the True Witness of August 14th in his hands, say that I have made an "eminently malicious and unprovoked attack" on the Old School Presbyterians!

(e) "The author frankly acknowledging that he hates Old School Presbyterianism, and his only ostensible object being to create a jealous and suspicious feeling in the South against the object of his hate."

The author frankly acknowledges no such thing. Here is what I say:

"I love the Presbyterian Church—I love her Confession of Faith; but I do not approve the Old School interpretation of it. I admire her Constitution, Form of Government and Discipline; but I do not admire the Old School *administration* of it. In short, I love Presbyterianism; but I hate Old Schoolism—Old Schoolism is not Presbyterianism."—See *Col. 4 and 7, Eagle, Nov. 10 and Dec. 13.* (Pp. 20 and 33.)

I have no objections, after eight weeks reflection, to reprint these lines. Nay, I wish every word I have uttered on this subject were written in letters of light, and hung out upon the four winds of heaven that the world might read. I do hate Old-Schoolism. "I hate every false way. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. Pride and arrogancy and the evil way and the forward mouth do I hate." —*Psalms 109, 204. Proverbs 8, 13.*

"The only ostensible object" of my columns is *not* what the editor positively affirms it to be. Every reader knows, and the editor knows, it is not. The entire column, No. 2, goes to show, and several sentences *avow* and *declare* that "while I am doing good service to the Old School Assembly and the public by making them better acquainted, and putting them in a fair way to *understand* each other, I am really "enforced by the rough torrent of occasion to defend myself." I do not suppose that, in order to justify myself in producing or publishing the evidences of treason or piracy against a citizen of the State, it was necessary to prove that the accused had, the night before, set fire to my dwelling. "The man whose ruling principle is duty," needs no *provocation* to do his country, or his fellow men, a service.—See *Col. 2, Eagle, Oct. 27.* (P. 13.)

(f) "His charge is that this church is pre-eminently an abolition institution." No reader of my columns will believe this. Elsewhere he says, I am "proving to the people of Mississippi that the Old School Presbyterian church is rabidly abolition." And again, that "these acts are represented by Mr. Newton as un-



mitigatedly abolition." "Pre-eminently, unmitigatedly and rabidly abolition" are neither the terms nor the *tone* of my columns. I undertook to show "the exact position" of the Old School General Assembly on the subject of slavery. I adduced their own records in proof. I have left it to every reader to say for himself what he thinks of the proof. If the editor of the Presbyterian deems the position proved, to be "pre-eminently, rabidly and unmitigatedly abolition," then be it so—I have never said so. Here is what I say: "I do not care to call this an abolition Assembly. Let them but be testimonied in their own bringings forth. Reader, is this an abolition Assembly? Say yourself—is it?"—*Cols. 1 and 2.* (P. 11.)

(g) "His proof of the charge, an array of all the General Assembly's deliverances on the subject of slavery, with his own peculiar glosses."

*Charge* is not the word or the thought of my columns. "His proof" of the position of the Old School Assembly, the editor should have said; I make no charge. Their position charges them. But no matter—let it stand as a charge—and I beg to ask what better *proof* under heaven could be offered in the premises than "an array of ALL the General Assembly's deliverances on the subject of slavery?"

"With his own peculiar glosses!" I have given no *peculiar* gloss on any one act, testimony, or deliverance of the General Assembly. On the contrary, my interpretation of the acts of the General Assembly are, each and all of them, supported by Old School *authority*. And besides, I do not offer my gloss, or interpretation of an act, as *proof*. I uniformly, earnestly, and with all the power which I am able to put into words, beg my readers *not* to mistake my words or opinions for *proof*. No writer, since letters were invented, was ever freer from the suspicion of attempting to think for his readers, than the author of the columns in the *Eagle of the South*. What must an honest public think of the editor of the Metropolitan Presbyterian, when with these words before his eyes, he remembers, as doubtless he must, that I say:

"I have no desire to supervise or control the reader's convictions, or his conduct, in reference to this question. We must compare, consider and judge for ourselves. I would put the means within his reach, and at his command, whereby, in the free and judicious exercise of the powers and privileges with which God has endowed him, he may think, reason, decide and act for himself. I have neither desired nor expected the reader to take my word, or to float passively in the wake of my opinions. I prefer that he should keep his head on his own shoulders. I have enough to do to take care of my own. I have relied upon the truth, upon the facts and arguments, as being fully able of themselves, to make their way through the world without the aid of my poor name."—See columns 3 and 7, *Eagle*, Nov. 3d, and Dec. 15th. (Pp. 15 and 53.)

(h) "Mr. Newton, through a convenient lapse of memory, if not of moral honesty, forgets to tell his readers, that these acts were not those of *part* of the church, but of the whole church as an undivided unit," &c.

"These acts!" What acts? The act of 1818 and those of an earlier date? I do tell my readers that the odious action of 1818, as well as those which preceded it, was the act of "the whole church." I distinctly state that in 1838, the church was separated into two divisions popularly distinguished by the denominations of New and Old School Presbyterians—and that "the anti-slavery action of 1818 took place forty years ago, and twenty years *before* the division." I further state that "after the division, both Assemblies, the New and Old School, without

doubt, approved and held, as in full force, the action of 1818" I again and again refer the action of the Assembly of 1818 to the fault of the age, and not to the *men* of that age. I say repeatedly that "I for one should never have disturbed its repose, but for the resolutions of more modern times, which reach back and embrace a period of nearly sixty years, and thus invest with full force all the deliverances of preceding Assemblies." And I hold the Old School Assembly *responsible* for "these acts" ONLY because they "deliberately and solemnly" assumed this responsibility in 1846, 1850, and in 1858. Who is guilty of *lapse of memory* or a want of *moral honesty*?

"These acts," separate from the action of all actions, the action of 1846, are not *charged* against Old Schoolism as a "crime." I expressly disavow any such intention. Nay I positively state that "the Old School Presbyterian Church in its distinctive character, dates back only about twenty years." The "THING enacted some half a century before Old Schoolism had an existence," every reader of my columns knows, and the editor knows well, is not *regarded*, or alleged by me, as a "crime" chargeable to the Old School. I every where throw the mantle of charity over the acts of the earlier Assemblies. And I every where profess that I would also have thrown the mantle of forgetfulness over them, even over the action of 1818 with all its odious features, if it had not been re-uttered, revived, endorsed, and solemnly avouched as "true and capable of vindication from the word of God" by the Old School General Assembly of 1846.

I wonder the editor ever ventured to write or print the words "convenient lapse of memory and moral honesty!" If his conscience has not become stone, his soul must have shuddered and his hand halted and hesitated to do his bidding, when he penned this paragraph.

(i) "Now, we ask Mr. Newton if he has ever repented of his share of the sin?"

I freely answer, No. New School men are not in the habit of repenting of other people's sins. Our fathers may have eaten sour grapes by the bushel; but that never set our teeth on edge. I have always supposed it to have been conceded to the Old School Presbyterians as a peculiar privilege—as they profess and acknowledge it to be a bounden duty—to repent of the sins of others, even as far back as Adam. I, and those associated with me, disapprove and repudiate the action of 1818. The editor and those associated with him approve and endorse the action of 1818.


(j) The reader will observe that Old Schoolism is not so *very* old, after all. It is quite a new thing—the editor of the Presbyterian being witness. My mortal *hate* of it, if not thus accounted for, it is to be hoped, will be in some degree excused.

But seriously, it is a shame, a burning shame that any *man*, but especially the Reverend editor of the Presbyterian with the sacred ensigns of his innocence and of his office floating around him, should deliberately write and send forth to the world such a sentence as this. He *knows* that I do not charge Old Schoolism with the *thing* which was enacted some half a century before Old Schoolism had an existence. He knows that I do inform my readers *when* each and every "*thing*" of the Assembly introduced by me was enacted. And he carefully *hides* from his readers the *fact* that the "*thing* enacted some half a century before Old Schoolism had an existence," was, to all intents and purposes, and in the strongest possible terms, re-enacted by the Old School Assembly of 1846.

(k) My readers are *not* left in ignorance of the fact that what I regard as the *abolition* act of 1818, was passed under very different circumstances from those which now exist. On the contrary, I distinctly and repeatedly state the fact, and

uniformly attribute that "deliverance" to those circumstances, I say, as the editor could not help seeing, "*Fuit culpa temporum, non eorum.*" It was the fault of the times and not of the men, either North or South. The editor knows well that I regard the action of the Old School Assembly of 1846, and that the Church regards it, as equally abolition with that of 1818. He makes a studied effort to misrepresent my columns in this respect. In the name of all that is *honest*, let me ask, what odds does it make, that the "*thing* which was enacted some half a century before Old Schoolism had an existence," was passed under circumstances very different from those which now exist; when, as is shown every where in my columns, the same **THING** was re-enacted and *repassed* in 1846, under the very same circumstances as exist now?

(h) "Under the circumstances *then* existing!"

Here is the same studied misrepresentation of my columns. The acts of 1815 and 1818 were probably voted for unanimously. It is a matter of no consequence who voted for them, or what they were, but for the revival of them in 1846. To *talk* about Southern brethren not protesting against the action of 1818, "under the circumstances *then* existing," is simply ridiculous in the eyes of every one who reads my columns. But there was  no protest against the action of '46, when the Old School Assembly affirmed that the action of "the whole Church" in 1818 is "true and capable of vindication from the word of God." I did not forget, nor do I now forget, to call public attention to this fact.

(m) "These acts" again! "These acts which are now represented by Mr. Newton as unmitigatedly abolition." I do not *represent* these acts at all. I *present* them. They *stand* for themselves. They *speak* for themselves. They do not claim to be "unmitigatedly abolition. They are not "pre-eminently" nor "rabidly" abolition. I never said they were. The editor knows my columns do not say they were. "These acts" do claim to be, and the editor knows they are, *abolition*.

But the editor says "these acts are as fairly chargeable on the South as the North, and as much New School as Old!" It is the same attempt to deceive. He knows that I do not adduce "these acts" either against the South or the North, the New School or the Old. But the action of the Old School Assembly, the Old School "part of the Church" in 1846—Is that as fairly chargeable to the New School as to the Old? I know not what proportion of Northern and Southern men voted for this action. It is made a point of paramount value in the columns, that no protest was recorded against it by Southern members. I have since ascertained that the action of 1846 was voted for by every Southern Commissioner.

(n) There are three *mistakes* in the first sentence of this paragraph: "That I fraternize with the New School Presbyterian Church at the North; that I am proving to the people of Mississippi that the Old School Church is rabidly abolition;" and, that "the New School Presbyterian Church at the North are zealous in demonstrating that the Old School Church is obstinately pro-slavery." I hope I shall ever *forget to enlighten* my readers by such *darkness* as this.

That the first is a mistake, and that the editor knew it was a mistake when he *mistook* it, I prove by his own testimony. For a little farther on, he says "the New School Presbyterian Church have been rent asunder by the question of slavery." Do those *fraternize* who are *rent asunder*! And in the first sentence of his editorial, he *presumes* that I am a "minister of Mr. Ross' *relic* Church in Tennessee!"

That I am not "proving" or attempting to prove, "that the Old School Presbyterian Church is rabidly abolition," my columns shall testify. The reader knows the statement of the editor is false. And as to the third, it is notorious that the New School Presbyterian Church at the North have never, at any time, made any *demonstration* on the subject. They have never even expressed an opinion. No evidence of such demonstration or expression can be found on the records of their General Assembly. And no where else but on the records of their General Assembly, *could* there be any evidence of such demonstration. A few *rabid, unmitigated and pre-eminent* abolitionists, individual members of the New School Presbyterian Church at the North, may possibly have been zealous in making this demonstration, for aught I know. But the Cincinnati Herald, the Christian Observer, the American Presbyterian, and the New York Evangelist, all New School papers, attempt no such demonstration. If they have, it has escaped my notice. On the contrary, the New York Evangelist, the most extensively circulated New School Presbyterian paper of the North, in a late *leader* of near two columns and a half (Dec. 23d,) on the discussion of the slavery position of the Old School Church, which has been going on for a year past, between Dr. Van Ransselaer of New York, and Dr. Armstrong of Virginia, takes occasion to speak of Dr. Van Ransselaer's Magazine, as reminding him of the bugle horn of Rhoderic Dhu, one blast of which "were worth five hundred men." And he closes his article with the words, "He must and will be sustained. Timidity may shrink back from the arena, discretion may counsel silence, but a voice like his will wake ten thousand voices."

Reader, excuse me. I have extended this column too far already. In casting my eye down through the remainder of this document, my heart sickens, and I must pause. Amazed and overwhelmed by the seemingly endless tissue of falsehoods and follies, misstatements and misrepresentations which stare me in the face, my bosom is stirred with conflicting emotions of sorrow and shame, indignation and contempt. My very soul shrinks and sinks within me, and my whole frame shudders, when I remember that the editor is a professed minister of Him who knoweth the heart, and who cannot be mocked.

The childish argument—if indeed it deserves the name of an argument—based on "contradictory accusations," is resorted to on all occasions, and by both North and South. The Presbyterian Herald of Nov. 17, 1858, has an article, "Attacked on both sides. The True Witness of August 14, says "Can both be true?" And hence they argue that they *are about right*. But the New School Presbyterian papers use precisely the same argument. The American Presbyterian, of Philadelphia, of Dec. 13, 1837, has the following: "Abused by both extremes we are comforted by the hope that we are *just about right*." He has three or four articles of late in which he resorts to this argument. And the Central Christian Herald, of Cincinnati, of May 13, 1857, *arguing* in the same line, says: "Mr. Burgess [the editor of the Free Church Presbyterian] looks from his extreme point on one side, as Dr. Newton and his friends do on the other!" And adds "Thus they are ultraists, in abusing those who cling to the TRUTH. Such opposition is no inconsiderable evidence that we are *right*."

If the argument proves that the Old School are right; it also proves that the New School North are *right* on the question of slavery.

As to the *sad plight of the poor church*, pleasing nobody because trying to please every body, the North and the South being mutually hoodwinked, it is the most natural thing in the world. It is the necessary evil of the *Blot and so*

*bar Platform.* It is *slippery*; and, of course, hard to stand upon. Many a sly, two-faced coward in the day that tried men's souls, caring more for plunder than for conscience and the right, deserved to be hung. "I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

(o) I did not forget to speak of the Old School Presbyterian Church as large and influential. (See *Columns*?)

And as to its being "one of the most harmonious bodies in the country," it is really a pity my readers do not know it, for the Old School have told it a thousand and one times! The most fatal "lapse of memory" incident to man is that which remembers what never took place. Such a memory, however, is very "convenient" to the editor of the Presbyterian. It supplies a lack not otherwise to be supplied!

(p) Have my readers seen nothing in my columns about the great "homogeneous, like-minded" Old School Presbyterian Church "all at peace, perfect peace?"

(q) Yes "constant and unalterable, substantially the same during a period of sixty or seventy years!"

(r) I neither know these *facts* nor grieve over them.

(s) Can that which is "fully revealed" be still a *secret*? I have no such desire either secret or revealed. I have no objection to say: *Fiat justitia, ruat coelum.*

(t) "His language, would he give it utterance?" I have generally given *utterance to my language*; and I believe most people of my acquaintance are in the habit of *speaking* their own words.

"Abolition proclivities!" Why should I *come down to assault* the Old School Church for its "abolition proclivities," when, the *honest* editor of the Presbyterian asserts positively and unequivocally, that I have already made a "fierce, eminently malicious and unprovoked attack" on the Church, and that I charge that the Old School Presbyterian Church is "rabidly, pre-eminently and unmitigatedly an abolition institution!"

(u) I beg the reader to excuse me for dissecting this *subject* in his presence. I have myself been nauseated and disgusted, with every stroke of my *scalpel*; and notwithstanding I have used all the *disinfecting agents* within my reach, have been constrained again and again, during the *operation*, as the several parts of the *body* have been laid bare, to turn away and seek relief and a breathing spell at my window. The operation has been a tedious one, and more unpleasant, I presume, to me than to the reader. But the *case* is a bad one—the worst that was ever brought to my *table*.

I am consoled by the reflection that I have performed an act that, however unpleasant or disagreeable to my feelings, was nevertheless a duty. I trust my "ostensible motive" will not be misunderstood or misrepresented by those who may hereafter choose to report the *case*. To guard against any thing of this kind, I hereby *avow* and *declare* that my *motive*, in taking hold of the *scalpel* on this occasion, has not been for service or reward, or *self-defence*; but for the benefit of *science* in general. I have seized this opportunity to uncover, *lay bare* and expose certain strange defects, excesses, idiosyncrasies, malconformations and diseases of a *body*, against which an honest public, I thought, ought to be forewarned and forearmed. How far I have succeeded, it is for those who have witnessed the *operation* to decide. Gentlemen, let us retire from these *rooms*, and seek the *pure air of Heaven*.

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REV. DR. VAN RENSSELAER.

*His views on the subject of slavery, and his interpretation of the Acts of the General Assembly.*

The Rev. Dr. Van Rensselaer, of New Jersey, Moderator of the General Assembly of 1857, and chairman of the committee on the *Union* question in 1858, who acted as *assistant* to Dr. Breckenridge, in effecting a safe *deliverance* of the Assembly on that occasion, has been carrying on, in his Presbyterian Magazine, during the past year, a discussion on slavery with the Rev. Dr. Armstrong, an Old School Presbyterian Minister of Virginia. The "Discussion on Slaveholding" is fresh from under the press in a pamphlet of one hundred and thirty-seven pages.

Dr. Armstrong is the author of "The Christian Doctrine of Slavery," published in 1857, in which he takes the position that "slaveholding is not a sin in the sight of God, and is not to be accounted an offence by his church." This position is ably sustained throughout the volume by appeals to the Scriptures alone; and is further fortified and defended by the author in the "Discussion."

Dr. Van Rensselaer objects to Dr. Armstrong's "statement;" and adopts and defends the following as his position, and the right form of statement: "Slaveholding is not necessarily, and in all circumstances, sinful."

The parties differ, and they discuss the question as to "the right of the church to utter opinions, or give advisory testimony in favor of emancipation."

The whole discussion is exceedingly interesting, suggestive and instructive just at this time; and, on many accounts, I could wish it were in the hands of all my readers. It supports and strengthens my *columns* on every side.

Dr. Armstrong's is, doubtless, the true Scripture position, and the right "form of statement." I have had his book more than a year, and have read it with great satisfaction. He maintains his position ably. But his "form of statement" is directly in the teeth of the acts and deliverances of the General Assembly. He seems to have felt this; for throughout his entire work, he makes no allusion to the *testimony* of the church, except in a note in the last page but one. On that page he has these words: "*God's work in God's way* the church at the South, in common with some portions of the church at the North also, have inscribed upon their banner." The note, at the bottom of the page, reads as follows: "See the paper adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, O. S., 1845. Assembly's Digest, p. 811-813."—See *Christian Doctrine of Slavery*, page 147.

I shall content myself with transferring to my *columns* some extracts from Dr. Van Rensselaer, going to show the tenor of the discussion on his part, and how he *handles* the deliverances of the Assembly. I trust the public, and my Old School friends, will be duly grateful for the wider circulation in this region, which I shall give to the *latest intelligence* from *head-quarters* on this subject. I happen to know that very few, in the southern section of the church are aware that such a discussion has been going on. I believe some of the Old School papers have never yet thought it *best* to advise their readers in regard to it. The *padlock* seems to have become quite "an institution" among them.

But let us to the extracts. The *italics*, and other marks of emphasis and significance are all the author's own. I never give an extract in any other way.

DR. VAN RENSSELAER :—"We both agree in the fundamental position that slavery *may* exist without sin ; that the relation, in itself considered, is not sinful. You prefer your statement of the doctrine—I prefer mine."

"The correctness of my form of statement is, I think, confirmed by several considerations. In the first place, this mode of stating the Scriptural doctrine of slavery *coincides with the testimonies of the Presbyterian Church.*"

"The General Assembly of 1818 uses the following language."

"We do, indeed, tenderly sympathize with those portions of our Church and our country, where the evil of slavery has been entailed ; where a great, and the most virtuous part of the community abhor slavery, and wish its extermination as sincerely as any others ; but where the number of slaves, their ignorance and their habits generally, render an immediate and universal emancipation *inconsistent alike with the safety and happiness of the master and the slave.* With those who are *thus circumstanced*, we repeat that we tenderly sympathize. At the same time, we earnestly exhort them to continue, and, if possible, to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery. We exhort them to suffer no greater delay to take place in this most interesting concern, than a regard to the public welfare truly and indispensably demands.'"

"The paper adopted by the General Assembly in 1845, by a vote of 168 to 13, assumes the same principle, and substantially adopts the form of my original statement. It says :

"The question which is now unhappily agitating and dividing other branches of the Church, is whether the holding of slaves is, *under all circumstances*, a heinous sin, calling for the discipline of the Church.'—P. 812. [*He refers to the Digest.*] 'The question which this Assembly is called upon to decide is this: Do the Scriptures teach that the holding of slaves, without regard to circumstances, is a sin?' P. 812.

"You perceive that the question is stated in words which resemble very much the words of a 'conservative.' Further :

"The Apostles did not denounce the *relation itself* as sinful. The Assembly cannot denounce the holding of slaves as *necessarily* a heinous and scandalous sin. P. 812. The existence of domestic slavery, *under the circumstances* in which it is found in the Southern portion of the country, is no bar to christian communion.' " P. 813.

"The conservatives of the Church every where uphold all the testimonies of the General Assembly in their true spirit and very letter." See *Discussion on Slaveholding*, Pp. 30–32.

Thus Dr. Van Rensselaer claims, and supports his claim to the *authority* of the Church for his position and statement, that slaveholding is not *necessarily*, and in *all* circumstances, sinful."

He might say the same, and so might the Assembly utter the same testimony in regard to homicide, disobedience to parents, resistance to civil rulers, profaning the Sabbath, and sundering the marriage bond. But I design to make no comment. The careful reader cannot fail to see the value of these quotations to me, and to my columns. Let us now hear the Doctor on the testimony of the General Assembly on emancipation. He maintains that "the church has a right to propose, and hold forth, emancipation as a righteous end, when Providence shall open the way."

## TESTIMONY OF THE CHURCH ON EMANCIPATION.

DR. Van Rensselaer says :

"The testimony of the General Assembly on emancipation, is important, as an exhibition of the general sentiments of the Presbyterian Church on this great social question, and particularly, as showing its interpretation of the Scriptures."

"The first deliverance of our Church on the subject, was made in the year 1787, by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, which was at that time our highest judicatory, and was in the act of forming our present ecclesiastical constitution : The deliverance is as follows :

"The Synod of New York and Philadelphia do highly approve of the general principles in favor of universal liberty that prevail in America, and the interests which many of the States have taken in promoting the abolition of slavery," &c. [He gives the entire deliverance, as I have given it in column No. 1, p. 8.]

He then states that this deliverance was re-affirmed by the Assemblies of 1793 and 1795 ; and that "the General Assembly of 1815 testified to the same effect"—quoting the extract which I give in my first column, and proceeds to say :

## ASSEMBLY OF 1818.

"In 1818, the largest Assembly that had yet been convened, met in Philadelphia. An abler body of divines, probably, never assembled in our highest judicatory. The paper adopted by them in relation to the subject of slavery, is too well known to require large extracts. It was drawn up by Dr. Ashbel Green, with the concurrence of Dr. George A. Baxter, of your own Synod. Dr. Speece, of Virginia, was Dr. Baxter's fellow-commissioner, from your old Presbytery of Lexington. I only quote a few sentences from this celebrated document."

"We rejoice that the Church to which we belong commenced as early as any other in this country, the good work of *endeavoring to put an end to slavery*, and that in the same work, many of its members have ever since been, and now are, among the most active, efficient and vigorous laborers."

"At the same time, we earnestly exhort them to *continue, and, if possible, to increase* their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery. We exhort them to suffer no greater delay to take place in this most interesting concern than a regard to the public welfare truly and indispensably demands.

"We, therefore, warn all who belong to our denomination of Christians, against unduly extending the plea of necessity ; against making it a cover for the love and practice of slavery, or a pretence for not using *efforts that are lawful and practicable* to extinguish this evil."

"And we, at the same time, exhort others to forbear harsh censures and uncharitable reflections on their brethren, who, unhappily live among slaves, whom they cannot immediately set free, but who are *really using all of their influence and all their endeavors* to bring them into a state of freedom as soon as a door for it can be safely opened."

"Note.—The Assembly's testimony of 1818 was re-affirmed at the *last meeting* of the Synods of Pittsburg and Ohio. These two Synods, in the midst of which the Western Theological Seminary stands, have been denominated 'the back-bone of Presbyterianism.' The testimony of 1818 contains some expressions which might be advantageously altered ; but, with the proper explanations, it is consistent with that of 1845. The parts I have quoted have not been excepted to, so far as I know."—*Discussion on Slaveholding*, pp. 40-42.



## ASSEMBLIES OF 1845, 1846.

Dr. Van Rensselaer says :

"The General Assembly of 1845, took action on the specific point whether slaveholding was, under all circumstances, a bar to Christian communion ; and in 1846, reaffirmed all the testimony uttered by preceding General Assemblies."

—*Discussion*, p. 42.

"In showing that my form of statement was coincident with that of the General Assembly, a comparison was instituted between it and all the deliverances of the General Assembly from 1798 to 1845. You carefully avoid any reference to any action of the General Assembly, except the one of 1845, which is the only one you venture to claim as in any respect covering your ground.— [This seems to be another case of *padlocking*.] Why is this, Doctor ? Are you afraid of the whole light ? Or do you think, that the action of 1845, was Scriptural, whilst all the previous action was only deducible by '*reason*' ? Or do you believe that the testimony of 1845 was contrary to, and subversive of the testimony of 1787 and 1818 ? If you take the latter ground, then I beg you to remember that the Assembly of 1846 passed the following resolution : '*Resolved, That in the judgment of this House, the action of the General Assembly of 1845 was not intended to deny or rescind the testimony often uttered by the General Assemblies previous to that date.*' (*Baird's Digest*, p. 814.) So you perceive that the Assembly's testimony is *one harmonious whole*."

"But without pressing you further upon this point I turn to your singular evasions in regard to the forms of statement adopted by the Assembly of 1845. These forms are obviously, both in spirit, and in words, so precisely like my own, that the only method of getting round them is to raise the cry of '*abolition*.'"—*Discussion*, p. 105.

"The last deliverance of the General Assembly in 1845, was affirmed by that body to be harmonious with the first deliverance in 1787. Fifty-eight years produced no variation of sentiment. This uniform testimony of the highest judicatory of the Church must naturally possess great weight or will avail much with every true Presbyterian."—P. 118.

"If Dr. Baxter was a wiser man eighteen years after 1818, and was thereupon entitled to the consideration of higher wisdom in 1836, then, still higher wisdom is due to the General Assembly in 1846, when that body re-affirmed the testimony of 1818, *twenty-eight* years after the issuing of their great document."—*Note*, p. 118.

"The Church, whilst it cannot prescribe political measures of emancipation, or the time of emancipation, has a perfect right to say to its members, as our General Assembly did in 1818 : 'We earnestly exhort them to *continue*, and, if possible, to *increase* their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery,' "&c."—P. 134.

"The Assembly's testimonies of 1818 and 1845, I regard as scriptural, harmonious, and, for the present at least, sufficient."—P. 25.

"It is clear that my statement concerning '*emancipation and the Church*' is no novelty, but that it is regular, orthodox, old-fashioned Presbyterian truth."—P. 43.

"Slavery in the United States must come to an end. Christianity is arraying the public opinion of the world against it."—P. 121.

"Can it (slavery) long survive the pressure of public sentiment at home and abroad ? When all Christians and civilized nations are opposed to its continuance, must it not, before long, adopt some active measures tending towards its abolition ?"—P. 130.

"Another sign of approaching crisis, favorable to some important results, is

in the *South* itself. After a long period of repose, it presents tokens of internal divisions, of excitement, and of extreme measures. The revival of the African slave-trade, which is a popular plan in six States, bids defiance to God and nations. The preparations, commenced in Maryland and elsewhere, to drive out the free blacks or reduce them to slavery; the movement to prohibit emancipation by legislative enactment; the laws against the instruction of the slaves; all the recent advances of slavery, including the judicial decision denying the rights of citizenship to free blacks, and carrying slavery into the national territories; and especially the lowering of the tone of public sentiment on the whole subject of slavery and emancipation, to which even ministers have contributed; all this has the appearance of an impending crisis, and points to some great result in Divine Providence, in spite of all the opposition of man; yea, and by means of it!"—P. 130

"I stand upon the good old ground, occupied by the Presbyterian Church from time immemorial. Believing it to be scriptural ground, I have endeavored to defend it; and shall, by God's grace, continue to defend it on all fit occasions, against extreme views either at the North or at the South. I further believe that my beloved brethren at the South occupy, in the main, the same conservative position—a position which has enabled our Church to maintain her scriptural character and her integrity."—P. 136.

"The *conservatives* differ fundamentally from the ultra faction which denounces slaveholding as necessarily sinful, and which accepts no solution but immediate and universal emancipation. Nor do they, nor can they, sympathise with the equally fanatical opinions on the other side. We profess to maintain the firm, scriptural ground occupied by our Church from the beginning. Presbyterians at the North have been enabled, under God, to uphold the testimonies of the General Assembly in their incorrupt integrity. Will not our brethren at the South appreciate our position, and the service we have rendered to morals and religion?"

"I rejoice in the belief that the Presbyterian Church is substantially united in the fundamental principles involved in this question. If any danger should hereafter threaten our unity, it will arise from the extreme advocates of slavery. So far as I have any personal knowledge of my brethren in the Southern section of the Church or have observed their proceedings in the General Assembly, I have yet to learn that they are disposed to depart from our ancient Presbyterian testimonies."—P. 63.

"The conservatives of the Church every where uphold all the testimonies of the General Assembly in their true spirit and very letter."—P. 32.

"It may be affirmed without boasting, and in humble gratitude to God, that the Presbyterian Church occupies a commanding position, at the present time, among the hosts of God's elect. Our declared principles on slavery, emancipation, and Christian fellowship will endure the scrutiny, and at last command the admiration of the world. Unterrified by Northern fanaticism, and unseduced by Southern, Presbyterians behold their banner floating peacefully over their ancient ramparts. With continued unity in our councils, the cause of philanthropy and religion will, under God, be safe in our charge, and be handed down with increasing victories from generation to generation."—P. 64.

"Thanks be to God, the Presbyterian Church has been the advocate of freedom in every land and age. Long may she maintain this position of truth and righteousness in the spirit of good will to all men, bond and free; and whilst she holds that slavery is not necessarily and in all circumstances sinful, may her testimony against the evils of the system, and in favor of emancipation be clear, consistent, and unwavering before God and the world!"

"Presbyterians at the North have remained steadfast in their integrity

amidst all the abolition agitation which has threatened injury and even destruction to the Church. We have deprecated the agitation, not simply on account of its own perverse nature, but on account of its influence in provoking extreme views among our brethren at the South. The Northern section of the Church, by its successful resistance to fanaticism, earnestly and fraternally appeals to the Presbyterians at the South, to remain equally true to the principles and the testimonies sanctioned by the unanimous voice of our General Assemblies, and by the higher authority of the sacred Scriptures."—Pp. 51, 52.

## WHO ARE ABOLITIONISTS?—WHO ARE THE ABOLITIONISTS?— TRICKS OF THE CONSERVATIVES.

Those of my readers who have not been in circumstances that would enable them to keep up with the progress of opinion, or who have not cared to bestow much attention upon the variety of opinion and of method prevalent among the opposers of slavery within the last few years, are often at fault, when they find men and parties who hold and express very stringent anti-slavery notions, condemning and denouncing in unmeasured terms *the abolitionists*. Indeed all that is necessary to allay suspicion, and to quiet all apprehension of the unsoundness of a man or a party in the minds of many, is for the man or the party in question to let off a little hot steam occasionally upon "Northern fanaticism," or fetch a fling or two against the madness of "modern abolitionists."

Reader, there is a fetch of policy in this method. This is a *way* those calling themselves "conservatives" have universally; and it too often proves, like Solomon's "way of a serpent upon a rock, too wonderful" for the uninitiated and the unwary. The hardest *hits* and the severest epithets are applied to *the abolitionists* by men and writers who are really abolitionists themselves, in our sense of the term. While they are heartily opposed to slavery, and "abhor [it] as sincerely as any others," as an "evil of immense magnitude," and are laboring, in their way, with "unwearied endeavors for its complete extinction," they justify themselves in denouncing *the abolitionists* in this way. There is such a thing as what has been denominated technical abolitionism, a sort of *neck-and-heels*, *whether-or-no* theory, whose professors and advocates are called "fanatics."

Your true and genuine abolitionist proper holds and preaches that "the relation itself is sinful"—that "the holding of slaves, in itself, without regard to circumstances, is necessarily and always a heinous and scandalous sin." He cannot tolerate slavery under any circumstances—no, not for an hour. He denounces it on all occasions, in all places, and always, as "the sum of all villainies, the curse of curses." He would tear down the Church, destroy the State, bury the Constitution, burn the Bible, and deluge our fair land with blood, to free the slave. In the language of the American Anti-Slavery Society, he says: "We shall allow nothing to stand between the slave and his emancipation." He would get up at midnight to tear in pieces a deed of gift, or a document making him a slaveholder by inheritance or for purposes of guardianship. Nay, he would stop on his way to his wife's funeral, and step aside from the solemn procession, to sign a deed of manumission; and would *mourn* that, having spent his tears for *her*, he had not floods remaining to be poured out over "the poor slave." In short, your real, bona fide abolitionist proper is a fool or a knave; perhaps both, if that is possible.

These are the men whom our "conservative" friends are wont to denounce as *the abolitionists*—the fanatics, the madmen, the freedom-shriekers of the North. Your modern and moderate *conservative* is never at a loss for an epithet or a flout for these "monomaniacs" and their "abominable dogmas." To hear them, or read them, and observe the strength and variety of their terms of reproach profusely given out on all occasions, and without occasion, you would be led to suppose that they are the only abolition-haters in the land! I have known no truly sound speaker or writer who can begin to keep up with them.

Thus, Dr. RICE, formerly editor of the *St. Louis Presbyterian*, and "the individual honored by the Assembly of 1845 as chairman of the committee on the important subject" of the anti-slavery memorials of that year, and who drew up that famous "deliverance" "against abolitionism so satisfactory to all Southern Presbyterians, Old School," is a good example.

Dr. Rice believes that slavery is "utterly inconsistent with the law of God—totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ, and a blot on our holy religion." He believes "it is a duty indispensably incumbent on all Christians to labor for the complete extinction, and, if possible, to effect a total abolition of slavery." And yet *he* is no *abolitionist*! He has been waging a war for years upon Dr. Montfort, editor of the *Presbyterian of the West*, Dr. McMaster, and other Old School Presbyterian abolitionists (so called) of the North-Western Synods. He has been for years accusing these men of a deep-laid scheme to build up a great seminary in the West to instil abolitionism into the young students of theology. Hear him. He says:

"Dr. Monfort throws aside all ambiguity, and advocates the extreme doctrine of abolitionism; and he even ventures to declare that the Presbyterian Church holds this doctrine! He says, 'the Church holds it, (slavery,) and we hold it to be, *per se*, in itself necessarily a heinous and scandalous sin, calling for the discipline of the Church upon any of her members who are really chargeable with its guilt.' The exceptions he is disposed to make are such as the most extreme abolitionists readily admit."

And again, Dr. Rice says:

"It is evidently the design of Drs. Monfort, McMasters and Thomas to form a thoroughly Abolitionist Seminary in the Northwest, and there to train young men to become agitators and destroyers of the peace of the Church."—See *Editorials in the St. Louis Presbyterian*, 1856.

The reader of Dr. Rice's articles on subjects having any bearing on the question of slavery and emancipation cannot fail to have observed how flippantly and contemptuously he *talks* about *the abolitionists*. He speaks of tricks and stratagems and wire-working. He says: "Our church has borne much reproach, and received much honor, because of its uncompromising refusal to endorse the unscriptural doctrines of abolitionism, and to join in its fanatical agitations."

He charges directly that a great *conspiracy* has been on foot for years, carried on by the Old School *agitators* of the North-West. And lately he has put out a *threat* that if Dr. Monfort *don't mind*, he will blow up the whole concern by uncovering and exposing their dark and destructive designs—the evidence of which he has put himself to a great deal of trouble to obtain. And yet this is the man who says of the Assembly's act of 1818, "I endorse every word of it!"

Dr. Rice has, within the last eighteen months, removed to Chicago. Having fought *the abolitionists* for many years while editor of the *St. Louis Presbyterian*,

he goes to Chicago to head off, shut up, and shut down the *abolition agitators* in that direction. Casting up mire and dirt continually, it requires skillful management to keep the waters of the Old School Presbyterian *sea calm*. In a late number of his new paper, the *Presbyterian Expositor*, he has the following :

"For ourself, believing the entire action of all our Assemblies on the subject of slavery to be perfectly consistent with itself, and with the word of God ; and holding every part of it in its plain literal meaning, we will resist every man, so long as we can wield a pen, whether in the South, or the North, who attempts to agitate the Church, secretly or openly, by pressing upon its adoption either abolitionist or pro-slavery views."

This latest "deliverance" of Dr. Rice on "the important subject," contains several points which I hope the reader will not permit to escape his notice.

"Pressing on its adoption either abolitionist or pro-slavery views!" This *dodge*, so popular, and so often and so long *pressed* into the service of conservative abolitionists, surely cannot deceive much longer. No Old School man, so far as I know or believe, ever yet has pressed upon the Church "the adoption of pro-slavery views." Dr. Rice cannot have the least apprehension that such views are likely to be pressed upon the Church, either by the South or the North. No minister or member of any church or denomination in the South, so far as I know or believe, has any desire whatever that the Church of which he is a member, should *adopt pro-slavery views*. I know that the doctrine of all, or very nearly all denominations in the South, openly and every where avowed, is that the Church has no doctrine and should have none, on slavery. They want no action of the Church, either for or against slavery. No request or petition to any Assembly, New or Old School, to any Conference, Convention or Association, ever went up from the South, pressing the adoption of pro-slavery views. I should as soon expect to see or hear of a petition to the Old School General Assembly next May, at Indianapolis, asking a solemn deliverance on the subject of Democracy ; or praying that reverend body to take action in favor of Wheeler & Wilson's sewing machine. There is not likely to be any necessity for much wielding of pens to resist the pressure of pro-slavery views upon the adoption of the Old School Church. I presume that a majority of the Southern members of the Old School would prefer a blank page on the subject of slavery ; and that all the past deliverances of the Assembly on the subject, had never been made, or were expunged from the records.

The attempt to humbug the North by a show of zeal, and a readiness to make *resistance* against the feigned *pressure* of pro-slaveryism from the South, is as wicked, and I hope it will turn out to be as weak, as the attempt to blind the South by spouting jibes and jeers against the *abolitionists* of the North.

What does Dr. Rice mean by pro-slavery views? If the Old School Presbyterians of the South should ask the Assembly to strike out all their past deliverances on the subject of slavery and its abolition, and so to leave a clean record with *nothing* on the subject, would that be pressing pro-slavery views upon the adoption of the Church? The General Conference of the Methodist Church, South, did not by their late action at Nashville, either profess, or adopt pro-slavery views. The United Synod of Presbyterians, organized at Knoxville, have adopted no pro-slavery views. We have been most egregiously misrepresented and slandered on this very point. I started to write *misunderstood* ; but that is impossible. Those

who have been honest enough to open their eyes before they attempt to describe what they have seen; understand us well enough.

I have been sometimes amused, but oftener pained at heart, to observe the manner in which Dr. Rice, and other *conservatives* like him, both New and Old School, utter their groans, complaints and menaces against what they are pleased to call "the ultra pro-slaveryism," the "ultra Southern views," and "the slavery platform" of the Churches in the South.

There is no such thing; and every body ought to know, as every body *may* know, that there is no such thing as a pro-slavery Church in all the South. Neither we, nor the Methodists, Cumberland Presbyterians, Baptists, the Episcopal nor Christian Church, have adopted any thing of the kind. Strange that adopting *nothing*, should be construed into the adoption of a pro-slavery platform! Strange that a man, either with or without eyes, should be able to read, "extreme ultra Southern views" on a blank page!

There may be individuals who entertain and advocate extreme views on the subject of slavery, as there are those in every association who advocate extreme views in every section and upon all subjects. But these opinions of individuals surely cannot, in fairness, be set down as the doctrine of the Church. No fact was ever more fully or more fairly set forth, and made to stand out more prominently before the world, than the fact that the universal public sentiment of our Southern people, both in and out of *communion*, is that all deliverances on the subject of slavery, its perpetuation or abolition, "are inappropriate to the functions of the Church of Christ." Even the Old School Presbyterians, I cannot but believe, though their records are burdened with the most odious deliverances on the subject all "*in full force*" to-day, form no exception, in the main, to the prevailing sentiment of the South. I must think they would prefer *nothing* to what they have. At all events, I am sure they will be found at the bar of the Assembly, praying for the obliteration and expunging of all past deliverances, many years before they will undertake to *press* "the adoption of pro-slavery views upon the Church." The Rev. Dr. Armstrong, in his book entitled "Christian Doctrine of Slavery," and also in the "Discussion on Slaveholding" with Rev. Dr. Van Rensselaer, contends that "On this matter of emancipation, Christ has given no command to his Church. The word of God contains no deliverance, either express or implied, respecting it. Hence, I affirm, the Church has no right to make a deliverance respecting it." This is essentially a political and not a religious question. The Bible makes no deliverance on the subject; but leaves it to be determined by the State—the Church having no right to interfere."—("Discussion," page 10.)

These, as I suppose, are the views of the members of the Old School Church generally in this section of the Union. But these views are not extreme, nor ultra, nor pro-slavery. Is Dr. Armstrong the "man" that Dr. Rice expects to *resist* when he "attempts to agitate the Church by pressing upon its adoption pro-slavery views? His weary pen may felicitate itself in the prospect of a glorious sleep, and may take its rest in editorial dignity, secure and undisturbed for a long time to come, before it shall be waked up, ordered out and wielded to *resist* the shadowy foe of pro-slaveryism at the door of the Old School General Assembly.

The task of resisting "every man who attempts to agitate the Church by pressing upon its adoption, abolitionist views," will be equally easy. The "abolitionist views" already adopted and now "*in full force*," will probably continue to prove satisfactory "for the present." There is no probability that any man from the North will seek an "occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith of the

Church" on this subject. There will hardly be found any man simple enough to attempt to agitate a Church all homogeneous, likeminded, quiet and at perfect peace on this subject, by pressing upon its adoption views which have been *uniformly* expressed, and "sentiments substantially the same," which have been held and uttered from time to time "during a period of nearly sixty years." The *threat* in this direction, therefore, is equally vain and idle, as that so artfully cast into the teeth of South.

I shall only call the attention of the reader to the fact that Dr. Rice, here, in the above extract from his Expositor, professes to *believe* that "the entire action of our Assemblies on the subject of slavery [is] perfectly consistent with itself," and that he *holds* "every part of it in its plain, literal meaning."

One would suppose that a man who holds, "in its plain literal meaning," that slavery is a "blot on our holy religion," INCONSISTENT "with the dictates of humanity and religion; and that "It is manifestly" the duty of all Christians to use their honest, earnest and unwearied endeavors, as speedily as possible, to obtain the *complete abolition* of slavery," is, himself, *some* of an abolitionist. But no. Dr. Rice is no abolitionist! He is down among them, and down upon them, with blows hot and heavy, and always ready, every where and on all occasions! It is his mission. He is *set* upon this fight, and so long as he can wield a pen he is going to "resist the devil" of *abolition* until he *flees*, and then he will persecute him even unto "strange cities!"

Dr. Breckenridge is another example. The people who heard his speech in the General Assembly at New Orleans, last May, on the question of union with the United Synod, must have thought him "too sound" on the slavery question. Hear him against the abolitionists:

*Dr. Breckenridge's Speech in New Orleans.*

"The world has periodical turns of madness. The religious world is not exempt from the charge, and he supposed we, ourselves, may be a little mad. Of this kind of moral epidemic, is the abolitionism which, of late, has raged in the North, and produced the scenes of folly and absurdity which have astonished all sane and prudent men. But better thoughts are beginning to prevail. The conviction which has always swayed this Assembly is gaining ground. Confining themselves to that, their peace flows onward like a river. Why, then, should they, without motive, break up this peace, and bring in elements of disturbance? To us of the South, and the weaker division, it would be madness to enter into such treaties. The great pressure on us from without is not on subjects of doctrine; but it is on the subject of Abolitionism. In our character of a Church, the world can look to us for nothing but what strictly belongs to the way of salvation. We of the South do not want the matter brought up. We do not want to discuss it here and now, nor at any other time or place, for three sufficient reasons. 1. The question of subscription we settled twenty years ago, at the cost of schism. 2. The question of Church power is a foreign question; our very existence depends upon our maintaining our position upon it. 3. The question of the black race, and their relation of servitude was settled seventy years since, in a multitude of ways, and with many conditions, but harmoniously; and we should not re-open it."

The above is a continuous extract from Dr. Breckenridge's speech in the Assembly of 1858. It is *rich* and *tempting*, as is also the entire speech. But I forbear; and resist all temptation to comment, because I am afraid to risk the

reader's patience. I hope every reader will observe closely and dissect for himself. I will add that this same Dr. Breckenridge denounces slavery as nothing less than "clear robbery," and slaveholders as "pick-pockets and horse-thieves"—boldly declaring that the action of the Assembly of 1818, contains "the principles of the Presbyterian Church of the United States. She has risen with them; she will stand, or, if it be God's will, she will fall with them." And yet *he* is no abolitionist! Only hear how he *talks* about "the folly and absurdity and great pressure" of the "moral epidemic" of "abolitionism" which has "astonished all sane and prudent men!"

Dr. Van Rensselaer is another *case* equally as good as those we have just discussed and discharged; but we must not stay now to present him to our readers. My column, No. 11, (pp. 65, 68) may be referred to for his views of the deliverances of the Assembly. He *upholds* "all the testimonies of the General Assembly in their true spirit and very letter." And yet, throughout his entire "discussion" with Dr. Armstrong, he scouts and scolds at "that faction, this fanaticism, fanatical abolitionism, abolition dogmas," &c. He descants upon "the evils of the course of the fanatical abolitionists, a perverse generation;" and brandishing in the air of the North, his "double-edged sword of truth," he threatens to "pierce to the dividing asunder of the bones of rampant abolitionism!"

Of course Dr. Van Rensselaer is no *abolitionist*. Could he *talk* this way, if he was an abolitionist?

Reader: These "conservatives," though they abuse abolitionism, are themselves, all, abolitionists. They are not abolitionists, proper and technical, rash and reckless; but they are abolitionists, common and practical, wise and wary.

The coarse, clumsy, clownish thief, who blunders headlong into your private chamber, is tumbled into the street without ceremony; but the sly, sleek, and gentlemanly-looking rogue, well-dressed and cautious, adroitly picks your pocket or rifles your drawer, while you are admiring his very polite bearing, and are ready to thank him for his kindly attention.

## THE ASSEMBLY'S CONSERVATIVE POLICY EXPOSED AND CONDEMNED.

### "TRUTH LOVES OPEN DEALING."

This ingenious and artful policy has been resorted to even by that body of Reverend Doctors and grave Elders, the Old School General Assembly itself. If I misunderstand or misrepresent them, or am wrong in any respect in expressing this opinion; or if the reader does not, with his own eyes, see it; and if he does not believe it, upon the evidence which I shall adduce from their own records, then I surely do not wish him to believe it. Let no one flinch from the investigation, or yield to the temptation to close his eyes against the evidence.

Let us first read what the Assembly have resolved, written and recorded against the abolitionists. I quote from the deliverance of the Assembly, 1845, *Baird's Digest*, pages 812, 818, as follows:

"That slavery existed in the days of Christ and his Apostles is an admitted fact. That they did not denounce the relation as sinful, as inconsistent with Christianity; that slaveholders were admitted to membership in the Churches organized by the Apostles; that whilst they were required to treat their slaves



with kindness \* \* \* \* they were not required to emancipate them, are facts which meet the eye of every reader of the New Testament. This Assembly cannot, therefore, denounce the holding of slaves as necessarily a heinous and scandalous sin."

"The Apostles of Christ sought to ameliorate the condition of slaves, not by denouncing and excommunicating their masters, but by teaching both masters and slaves the glorious doctrines of the gospel, and enjoining upon each the discharge of their relative duties. Thus only can the Church of Christ as such, now improve the condition of the slaves in our country."

"The Assembly intend simply to say, that since Christ and his Apostles did not make the holding of slaves a bar to communion, we, as a court of Christ, have no authority to do so; since they did not attempt to remove it from the Church by legislation, we have no authority to legislate on the subject. We feel constrained further to say, that however desirable it may be to ameliorate the condition of the slaves in the Southern and Western States, or to remove slavery from our country, these objects we are fully persuaded can never be secured by ecclesiastical legislation. Much less can they be attained by those indiscriminate denunciations against slaveholders without regard to their character or circumstances which have to so great an extent characterized the movements of modern abolitionists, which so far from removing the evils complained of, tend only to perpetuate and aggravate them."

The same year (1845,) the Old School Presbyterian Assembly, in their correspondence with "the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland," says: "You are strangers, we presume, in a great measure to the principal cause of the aggravations which attend domestic slavery in this country; such as the severity of particular laws enacted in the slaveholding States, and the extreme sensibility with which many of our fellow-citizens there refuse to receive advice and entertain discussion. That cause is mainly the vehemence and fanatical intolerance with which many in what are called the free States urge on the South, instant abolition, without regard to circumstances, consequences, or even warrant from the word of God itself."

In their letter, the same year, to "The Free Church of Scotland," they say: "The State never interferes with us as a Church; \* \* \* \* and she expects in return that we meddle not with her civil and domestic regulations; one of which is slavery." They also say: "We dare not \* \* \* \* exclude from the pale of our communion, members that hold a relation which Christ and his Apostles did not declare \* \* \* to be incompatible with Christian fellowship."

And in 1846, in another letter to the Irish Assembly, they speak of their "ancient, deliberate and settled testimony, clear and constant, on a subject for a long time and very carefully examined"—and give "the substance of the testimony borne from generation to generation by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, upon this point"—thus: "Our fathers, from the beginning, as we ourselves now, and the Church constantly, have held and testified, that slavery, as it has long existed, and does still exist, in many of the States of this Union, cannot scripturally be made a term of Christian or Ministerial communion; and that on the other hand, it is an institution which this Church never did, and does not now, set itself to defend." See "*Correspondence with foreign Churches*," *Baird's Digest*, pp. 539-542.

Now all this sort of talk about denouncing the relation itself," excommunicating the masters of slaveholders, claiming the authority to legislate on the subject,"

and condemning "these indiscriminate denunciations against slaveholders which have to so great an extent characterized the movements of modern abolitionists," sounds amazingly well in the ears, and is well calculated to quiet the apprehensions of slaveholding members of the Church as to the soundness of the General Assembly.

But I wish to charge distinctly, and in language that cannot be misunderstood—what I shall now proceed to show and establish beyond all intelligent controversy—that all this is nothing more nor less than a downright *ruse de guerre*, a mere stratagem of war, a sheer pretext designed to deceive—Or, that the Assembly of learned Doctors and Reverend Divines have stultified themselves. Upon one or the other of these two *counts* I demand a verdict. I know that this is strong language, and I am sorry that no other language is suited to the exigencies of the occasion. "Diseases desperate grown, by desperate appliances are healed."

### *The Proof.*

In the first paragraph of the above extracts it is said that Christ and his Apostles "did not denounce the relation itself as sinful—as inconsistent with Christianity," that the masters who were members of the Churches organized by the Apostles "were not required to emancipate" their slaves. And that, therefore, "this Assembly cannot denounce the holding of slaves as necessarily a heinous and scandalous sin."

Now what is all this said for? *Who* believes that "the relation itself is sinful?" *Who* denounces "the holding of slaves as necessarily, under all circumstances, a heinous and scandalous sin?"—*The abolitionists.* "The fundamental principle of ultra abolitionism," says Dr. Van Rensselaer, "is, that slaveholding is in itself sinful"—"that slaveholding is always and every where sinful, and that emancipation is an immediate and universal duty."

I ask again, what is all this said for? Evidently and only for the purpose of *denouncing* "the indiscriminate denunciations of modern abolitionists"—and to make a show of fight, sounding the trumpet of attack, turning all eyes and calling all hands to the little citadel of a few insane "fanatics" whose rash words and mad methods have only tended "to aggravate the evils complained of," that, under cover of this diversion, unsuspected and unmolested, they may "continue and, if possible, increase their exertions" in the "good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery," and so succeed, in this cautious and more excellent way, in "bringing about the *great end* contemplated"—"a total abolition of slavery."

The Assembly know well that no sane man believes that "the relation itself is sinful."

Does any body pretend that homicide—which all men denounce as a scandalous sin—is a sin, in itself, "without regard to circumstances?" Disobedience to parents is a heinous sin in the sight of God; but no man in his senses believes it is a sin "under all circumstances." Marriage within the degrees of consanguinity forbidden in the word of God is a scandalous sin in the estimation of all except the most debased and barbarous nations. But "the relation itself" is not a sin; nor do Christ and his Apostles denounce it as a sin, "without regard to circumstances." And even the profanation of the Sabbath-day, which the Scriptures denounce as a sin, is not such, "necessarily and under all circumstances." For the same High Authority which explicitly commands, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," assures us that "the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are blameless."

The Assembly knew equally well that not one in a hundred thousand of the people who "abhor slavery" ever pretended that Christ and his Apostles *denounced* the holding of slaves as *necessarily*, and, under *all* circumstances, a heinous and scandalous sin. They know that none but the few blind, self-deceived and "fanatical abolitionists"—and they are very few indeed—were ever suspected of so monstrous an absurdity. Such men—if there be such, and I do not believe a hundred can be counted in the Union—are more likely to be found within the wards of an Insane Asylum, than mingling in the councils of the Church. The "modern abolitionists" who denounce slaveholding, as "necessarily and under all circumstances, a heinous and scandalous sin," have uniformly *denounced* Christ and his Apostles and the Church, because they do *not* denounce "the relation itself as sinful;" and they have *labored* "to extinguish the evil of slavery," not by the authority, but in defiance of the authority, of "Christ and his Apostles." They have openly avowed their infidelity, and opposition to the Bible and the Church, and are not likely to trouble themselves or anybody else by interfering with either.

All this solemn parade, therefore, on the part of the Old School Assembly, is but sheer blustering, and a war against the wind.

Or,

Let us now look upon the other *count*. In the same paragraph, the Assembly say, that Christ and his Apostles "did not denounce *the relation itself* as *inconsistent* with Christianity"—and that the slaveholding members of the Churches organized by the Apostles were "*not required to emancipate them.*"

But the Old School General Assembly *do* denounce SLAVERY as *inconsistent* with Christianity. Hear them:

"The inconsistency of slavery, both with the dictates of humanity and religion, has been demonstrated, and is generally seen and acknowledged." They denounce "the voluntary enslaving of one portion of the human race by another as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, **UTTERLY inconsistent** with the law of God, and **TOTALLY irreconcilable** with the spirit and principles of the Gospel of Christ."—(*Deliverance of 1818, re-affirmed in 1846.*)

Here we have their own *words*, going to show that the Assembly are doing, and have done, "during a period of nearly sixty years," what they themselves declare that Christ and his Apostles did not do. Their denunciations of slavery "during all this period" cover whole pages of their records, and far outnumber and outweigh all they have ever said against theft, murder, perjury and piracy. And then after all, as if to signalize their folly, they put in a claim and ask to be credited for *not* doing what Christ and his Apostles did not do, thus: "Our Church has from time to time, during a period of nearly sixty years, expressed its views on the subject of slavery. During all this period it has held and uttered substantially the same sentiments." But as "Christ and his Apostles did not denounce the relation *itself* as sinful and inconsistent with Christianity," so neither can we. And as they did not "denounce the holding of slaves as *necessarily* and *under all circumstances* a heinous and scandalous sin," this Assembly cannot do so. This would be taking part with the fanatical abolitionists—a thing which "our Church" has never done, and cannot now do. For "however desirable it may be to remove slavery from our country, we are fully persuaded" that this object can never be "secured by those indiscriminate

denunciations against slaveholders without regard to their character and circumstances, which have to so great an extent characterized the movements of modern abolitionists."

The "uniform testimony" of "our church" is only against *slavery*, not against "the relation itself." The denunciations of our church are "capable of vindication from the word of God"—but they are uttered against *slaveholding*—not against "the holding of slaves without regard to circumstances." Here is what "our Church" says :

"We consider the voluntary enslaving of one portion of the human race by another as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature; as utterly inconsistent with the law of God which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the Gospel of Christ. . . . "The inconsistency of slavery"—yes, of slavery, not "the relation itself," mind ye—"the *inconsistency* of SLAVERY, both with the dictates of humanity and religion, has been demonstrated and is generally seen and acknowledged." . . . "Slavery creates a paradox in the moral system . . . the slave is deprived of his natural right, and degraded as a human being." . . . "In those portions of our Church and "our country where the evil of slavery has been entailed upon them, a great, and the most virtuous part of the community, abhor slavery."—(*Deliverance of 1818, reaffirmed in 1846.*)

The reader must not fail to observe that the worst feature in the face of this case is the unfair assumption and unpardonable imputation, on the part of the Assembly, that Christ and his Apostles *did denounce* SLAVERY. This, though not directly affirmed, is evidently and unquestionably implied.

For, if the Assembly cannot denounce "the relation itself," as sinful and inconsistent with Christianity, because Christ and his Apostles did not; they could not denounce *slavery* as "utterly inconsistent with the law of God, the dictates of humanity and religion," if Christ and his Apostles did not. And if the Assembly cannot denounce "the holding of slaves as necessarily and under all circumstances a heinous and scandalous sin," because Christ and his Apostles did not; they surely could not denounce *slavery* as "a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, a paradox in the moral system, and a blot on our holy religion," if Christ and his Apostles did not so denounce it.

If a sincere and sacred regard to the example and authority of Christ and his Apostles restrained the Assembly from denouncing "the holding of slaves under all circumstances as a heinous and scandalous sin," how dare they venture, in the very face of that same example and in defiance of that authority, to denounce *slavery* as *inconsistent* "with the dictates of humanity and religion—a blot on our holy religion, totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ?" Christ and his Apostles, as the Assembly and all the world know, neither pronounced nor denounced either slavery or "the relation itself," as "a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature." Christ and his Apostles neither deemed nor denounced either the holding of slaves, or the holding of slaves without regard to circumstances, as "a blot on our holy religion, utterly inconsistent with the law of God."

And here we have the sufficient and satisfactory reason why Christ and his Apostles did not require the holders of slaves to emancipate them; and never exhorted them either to "commence," "continue," or "increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery."

Had Christ and his Apostles "held and uttered substantially the same sentiments" as those held and uttered by the Old School Presbyterian Assembly, they would no doubt have *delivered* their "uniform testimony" against slavery, as the Assembly have done, and they would have *required* the holders of slaves, to emancipate them, and thus to *commence* "the good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery" at home, in their own households; and would have *earnestly exhorted* them, as the Assembly do, "to continue, and if possible to increase their exertions to effect a *total abolition of slavery.*"

Had Christ and his Apostles delivered their testimony against "the evil of slavery," as the Assembly have done; they would have exhorted their people, as the Assembly do, to be honest and earnest in "using efforts to *extinguish this evil.*"

Had Christ and his Apostles testified, as the Assembly have testified, that "our country has inflicted a most grievous injury upon the unhappy Africans by bringing them into slavery;" they would have *rejoiced*, as the Assembly do, to witness the *desires and efforts* of slaveholders "to deliver themselves and their country from the calamity of slavery."

Had Christ and his Apostles "expressed their views on the subject of slavery, from time to time, during a period of nearly sixty years," as the Assembly have done; they would also have testified, as the Assembly do, that it is "the duty indispensably incumbent on all Christians to labor for its *complete extinction.*"

Had there been in "the Churches organized by the Apostles," as the Assembly boast there have "ever been, and now are, in the Church to which [they] belong, many members who are among the most active, vigorous and efficient laborers in the good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery;" and had the Apostles deemed "the abolition of slavery a most interesting concern," they would probably have felt and experienced the same *joy* and satisfaction in anticipating the success of "the great end contemplated," and would, most likely, have recorded the *fact* of the "many laborers," thus engaged in "the good work," as a memorial of them, and as an example to the Church and to the world in all coming time.

Had Christ and his Apostles believed, as the Assembly say they do, that "in those portions of our Church and our country where the evil of slavery has been entailed on them, a great and the most virtuous part of the community abhor slavery and wish its extermination;" they would have *tenderly sympathized* with them, and would have *earnestly exhorted* them, as the Assembly do "those who are thus circumstanced, to continue, and, if possible, to increase their exertions to effect a *total abolition of slavery.*"

Had Christ and his inspired Apostles *enjoyed* "the light of the present day"—had they "seen and acknowledged the inconsistency of slavery both with the dictates of humanity and religion," as the Assembly declare it is "generally seen and acknowledged" to be—had they filled whole chapters of the New Testament, as the Assembly have covered entire pages of their records, with *solemn deliverances* upon "the evil of slavery," denouncing it as "a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature" and a "blot on our holy religion, utterly irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ,"—the fires of abolitionism would have been kindled up in their righteous bosoms, unquenched and unquenchable; and they would have lifted up their voices like trumpets, and proclaimed in all ears, and impressed upon the pages of the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, the sentiment of

*duty* in words unambiguous and unmistakable as these uttered by the Old School General Assembly: "It is **MANIFESTLY** the **DUTY** of ALL Christians to use their *honest, EARNEST* and unwearied endeavours, as speedily as possible, to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the **COMPLETE ABOLITION** of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible, throughout the **WORLD**."

Had Christ and his inspired Apostles been of "the most virtuous part of the community," as the Assembly and their "efficient laborers in the good work" are, (Heaven forgive the irony!) they would probably have *abhorred slavery* as sincerely as the Assembly do. Had they abhorred slavery as sincerely as the Assembly do; they would have *wished its extermination*, as the Assembly do. Had they abhorred slavery and wished its extermination as sincerely as the Assembly do; they would, "from time to time," during the whole period of their ministry, have "expressed their views on the subject of slavery," as the Assembly say *their Church* have done, "during a period of nearly sixty years;" and would have denounced it as a "blot on our holy religion," as the Assembly do. And had they denounced slavery as a "*blot* on our holy religion," as the Assembly do; they would have pronounced it a "*bar* to Christian communion," as the Assembly do **NOT**.

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Or—We may come to an *end*, this way: Had Christ and his Apostles denounced slavery as a blot on our holy religion, as the Assembly do; they would have openly declared, as the Assembly do, that "it is manifestly the duty of all Christians," and they would earnestly have exhorted all Christians, to efface this blot, to use their endeavors and increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery, and as speedily as possible to obtain the complete abolition of slavery." And if they had *earnestly* exhorted all Christians, as the Assembly do, to the *manifest duty* of endeavoring, as speedily as possible to effect and obtain a total and complete *abolition* of slavery; they would have honestly acknowledged that they were *abolitionists*, which the Assembly do **NOT**.

Not one word or syllable, however; not one jot or tittle of any, or all this, or any thing like this, was ever uttered, testified or delivered, either by Christ, or by his inspired Apostles. But

"The Assembly intend simply to say, that since Christ and his inspired Apostles did not make the holding of slaves a bar to Christian communion, [they] as a court of Christ have no authority to do so. Since they did not attempt to remove it from the Church by legislation, we have no authority to legislate on the subject."

"No authority?" Why not? By what authority do they make slavery a *blot*? They have the same authority to make it a *bar*.

"No authority to legislate on the subject?" Christ and his inspired Apostles *had* authority to legislate on the subject of slavery; and did not. The General Assembly, "as a court of Christ, have no authority to legislate on the subject;" and *do*! The Assembly have certainly satisfied all men that they *would legislate* on the subject of slavery, if they had the authority! They seem to feel and to regret the want of a Divine warrant for this "good work;" and evidently put in a plea, by way of apology or excuse for not legislating on the subject, that they have "no authority to do so." It will be very difficult for them to make the public see that the acts, testimonies and deliverances of the Assembly on

the subject of slavery are any thing different from "ecclesiastical legislation." What more could they do "by ecclesiastical legislation, to remove slavery from the Church," if they had the authority, than is done by the solemn deliverances, uniform and substantially the same during a period of nearly sixty years, that "it is manifestly the duty, a duty INDISPENSABLY incumbent on all Christians to labor for the complete extinction, the complete and TOTAL ABOLITION of slavery?"

This sort of complaint, on the part of the Assembly, that they have "no authority to make slavery a bar to Christian communion" and "no authority to legislate on the subject," is something like an impeachment of the wisdom of Heaven.

If Christ and his Apostles had *enjoyed* what the Assembly call "the light of the present day," as it radiates from the abolition fires of the Old School Presbyterian Church Assembly, and had thereby been enabled to *see* this blot on their holy religion, and to *acknowledge* its *inconsistency* with the law of God; they would, by the *authority* given them from on high, having forged a BAR more impenetrable than steel, and a rampart more impregnable than granite, against which "the gates of hell" could not prevail.

The Old School Presbyterian Assembly, by the *authority* of the abolition "light of the present day," make slavery a "*blot* on our holy religion;" and by the authority of Christ and his Apostles they make it "*no bar* to Christian communion." And herein and hereby they stultify themselves, and take their "exact position" far out of sight of reason, philosophy, morals, religion and the word of God; and there stand, naked and uncovered, upon the most distant limits of the cheerless region of absurdity.

This is incredible! exclaims the reader. I cannot see how it is possible for such a body, so learned, so pious and so respectable, to be guilty of perpetrating such a *system* of nonsense and absurdity as this.

Possible! That is not the question. You see it is a *fact*, do you not? *How* such a fact can be, is altogether another question. My way—and I think it is the most charitable, as well as the most philosophical way—of accounting for such a fact, is this: Public *bodies* have no *souls*; and what is worse, I fear that many of them have no *consciences*. The Old School Presbyterian Assembly has held and uttered sentiments which nobody who has a soul or a conscience *could* utter. Somebody, to be sure, must be very guilty. I should be sorry to believe—I do not believe—that the members of the body generally have voted wittingly and deliberately upon these deliverances. "Their great ones exercise authority upon them:" (*Mark* x., 42.) Others simply acquiesce, blindly follow, and meekly wear the collar that is fitted to their necks. I am sure that the masses, the members of the Church in the South, and the public, have not understood their "exact position."

## THE PRESBYTERIAN'S SECOND DELIVERANCE UPON THE COLUMNS.

"The times are wild and much disjointed. There's scarce truth enough alive to make societies secure; but security enough to make fellowship accursed."

(From the *Philadelphia Presbyterian* of February 19.)

"DR. NEWTON.—This gentleman, as we have already apprized our readers, is laboring hard in Mississippi, by all manner of misrepresentation and false interpretation, to present the Old School Presbyterian Church in an odious light before the Southern public on the subject of slavery. He is a New School man, and the very one who, at the New School Convention in Virginia, offered the resolution for a union of that body with the Old School Church! Failing in this, he has changed his tactics, and now earnestly endeavors to foment ill-feeling in the South against our Church, in the hope of inducing a secession of Southern members. So far he has failed to make the first convert, at least among the ministers. The *Philadelphia Observer*, New School, has commenced the republication of the false presentations of Dr. Newton, and other papers of the like kind will, no doubt, do the same, with the *benevolent* and *Christian* hope of disturbing our peace and dividing our household. May the Lord turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

The New Orleans *True Witness*, of March 12th, copies the above without comment or remark.

The ingenuous reader who perused the first *deliverance* of the *Presbyterian*, which I copied entire on page 54, and those who counted and measured the number and magnitude of the *mistakes*, of which, with my assistance, the editor convicted himself in that short article; will be surprised to learn that the above is *all* of the stately Metropolitan's *deliverance* No. 2!

I sent him, damp from under the press, my article containing the indubitable proofs of his weakness and wickedness. And here he comes again, with no retraction of his manifest misstatements, no acknowledgment of flagrant errors, no candid confession of sins committed! But instead, we are greeted with another blow, and a *blind strike* at the "all manner of misrepresentation, false interpretation and false pretensions of Dr. Newton!"


Not the slightest hint is given to his readers that any one in the broad world had taken exceptions to his *first deliverance*! The *oracle* simply chooses to speak again. His ten thousand readers must take his bare word. No specifications, no allusions to particulars, no descending to such trifling matters as facts, and reasons, and records. These he scorns, despises, and utterly ignores! It is really humiliating to think that any one bearing the honored name of Presbyterian, which, in days gone by, was but another name for intelligent, sturdy, stubborn, manly self-opinion and self-government, should attempt thus to *manage* Presbyterians, and *do the thinking* for the reading public of this age and of this country, either North or South.

Why don't the editor point his finger at *some* of the "all manner of misrepresentation" which he charges upon me? Why don't he expose *some* of the "false interpretation" of which he so flippantly accuses my columns? Why don't he specify a few, at least *one*, of "the false presentations of Dr. Newton," which in his peculiar style, he chooses to denounce?

I will surrender at discretion, cross my hands, go to prison, and suffer the



penalty, patiently as may be, whenever I shall be convicted of any *one misrepresentation, false interpretation or false presentation*, on this question of the "exact position of the Old School General Assembly on the subject of slavery."

If my *columns* stand in the way of any body, or if I have been an annoyance to any, there is an easy way—but there is but one way,—of demolishing my structures, burying me in the ruins, and putting me to silence forever.  Apply the usual tests—make the examination in daylight—invite the public to be present and to witness the experiment; and if a "false" or faulty stone is detected, and "wood, hay and stubble" are found to have been stealthily substituted for the solid granite, and *sound material* which I have bargained to furnish, and professed to use in the entire *work*, the torch of truth, or the solvent of historic records, promptly applied, will do the business for me at once. Once detected and exposed in *all*, or in *any* "manner of misrepresentation, false interpretation or false presentations" on such a subject as this, and of such a body as the Old School Presbyterian Church in the United States, I should not dare ever again to lift up my head among honorable, honest or Christian men; but would betake myself to some dark, dreary, doleful, desert corner of the earth, and there weep out the few remaining days of my life in the bitter anguish of disgrace.

But NO! Nothing of this kind is done, or attempted. The editor *knows*, and his more cautious, sly, silent, sibilant sympathizers in the South, *know* well, that nothing of this kind *can* be done. He *knows*, and they *know*, that I have not misrepresented "the constant and unalterable faith of [their] Church" on the subject of slavery. He knows, and they know, that I have made no "false presentations" of their "views on the subject of slavery," or of the sentiments held and uttered by their Church, from time to time, during a period of seventy years. He knows, and they know, that I have given no "false interpretation" of any of their multitudinous *deliverances* on what they choose to call "this blot on our holy religion" nor of their "exertions to effect a TOTAL ABOLITION OF SLAVERY."

But the lucky editor has found out,—and he *tells it on me!* that I am a "New-School man, and the very one who, at the New School Convention in Virginia, offered the resolution for a union of that body with the Old School Church!"

Well, suppose I am a New School man; Does that effect the position, alter the records, or annul the deliverances, of the Old School Assembly on Slavery? And suppose I did offer a resolution for a union; has that any thing to do with "the constant and unalterable faith" of the Old School Presbyterian Church on the subject of slavery! Is this Old School logic?

I am a New School man; but I offered no resolution at the Convention in Virginia for a union of that body with the Old School Church. This is one of the editor's "false presentations of Dr. Newton."

No resolution was offered, or adopted, at the New-School Convention in Virginia, "for a union of that body with the Old School Church." No member of that Convention was silly enough to perpetrate so profound an absurdity.

I did offer a resolution in the Richmond Convention, which resolution was adopted unanimously, and has been already given entire to my readers on page 39. But my resolution was not for a union of the Convention with the Old School Church. It recommended, "That the United Synod, when formed and duly organized, shall *invite the General Assembly* (O. S.) *to a fraternal conference* with us in reference to such union."

"Failing in this, he has changed his tactics!" Failing in what? Did not the

United Synod invite the Old School Assembly to a fraternal conference in reference to union? Did not they lay down in definite terms the conditions deemed "indispensable to an honorable union on our part?" There was no "failing in this." The object of the resolution was fully carried out. It is true, the Old School Assembly unanimously rejected our terms, and there was no union effected. But that was a *failing* on their part, not on ours. They were not willing to "revise the constant and unalterable faith of [their] Church" on the subject of slavery; and this they offered as a reason why they could not agree to a union with us. (See this whole matter of the proposed union discussed and explained on pages 40, 41.)

Perhaps about as much was accomplished by our proposition for union as its most sanguine friends had reason to expect. It has fairly tested and more fully developed the spirit of Old Schoolism. It has served to bring out the Assembly at this late date—so late as May, 1858—in an open and unanimous declaration that the entire Old School Presbyterian Church is *of one mind, and at peace*, on the subject of slavery; and that they "see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith" of their Church on that subject! What that *faith* is, I have fully shown from their own records. They hold slavery to be a

"Blot on our holy religion, utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ."

And that "It is manifestly the duty of all Christians to use their honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavors, as speedily as possible, to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible throughout the world."

"False presentations of Dr. Newton!" What does the *learned* editor mean? Does he design to charge himself with making "false presentations" of me and my columns? There can be no question that at each *deliverance* that has *happened* to the editor, there has been a *false presentation* of me and my columns. The editor does not and dares not *present* me as I am and as I appear in my columns, nor even to show a *sample* of me or of my columns, to his readers. Not a sentence does he quote, not a single paragraph does he dare to transfer to his own page. He dares not trust me or any portion of my columns to the judgment of his readers. He prefers to do all the labor of reading, reasoning, and deciding *for* them.

A friend at my elbow suggests: *Offer him a hundred dollars. if he will publish in his paper your review of his first deliverance and this article; and I will pay the money.*

\* \* \* \* \*

I have accepted the proposition of my friend. The money has been deposited, and the matter properly arranged with a banking house in the city; and I have, in a letter to the editor of the Presbyterian, made secure to him *one hundred dollars*, on condition that he publish in his paper, within one month from this date, the whole of my column No. 10, and of this No. 14.

I am glad that the readers of the Presbyterian are in a fair way of having an opportunity for once of thinking for themselves. Gentlemen, permit me to congratulate you!

## THE HAND BOOK ON THE QUESTION OF SLAVERY.

"*The Hand Book on the slavery question*" is a volume of two hundred and fifty-six pages, octavo, by the Rev. John Robinson, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Ashland, Ohio. It was published in 1852, with the strong recommendations of Dr. Rice, Dr. Hoge, Dr. Elliott and other leading men in the Old School Presbyterian Church.

I wish, in this column, to introduce this Hand Book,—a sort of *rara avis* on our side of Mason and Dixon's Line,—to the acquaintance of my readers. Published under the patronage of Dr. Rice, and bearing his endorsement, as well as that of other ex-moderators of the Assembly, it is well worthy of attention.

The Rev. Dr. Van Rensselaer, the moderator of the Assembly of 1857, who preached the opening sermon in the Assembly of last year, in New Orleans, quotes from the Hand Book of slavery, and says, "This is one of the best books on the subject yet published, containing much valuable information and able discussion."—See "*Discussion on Slaveholding*," 1858, p. 43."

I can give but few extracts, and I shall make but few comments. I wish the Hand Book could be seen by all my readers. It would make assurance doubly sure as to my definition of the position of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on the subject of slavery.

On the title page, we have "The Testimony and Practice of the Presbyterian Church in reference to American slavery," and in the last sentence of the Preface, the Author's prayer:

"That the Great Head of the Church may own and bless his feeble efforts to stay the progress of schism, withstand the onsets of fanaticism, establish the truth, unite the people of God, and call forth their energies in a scriptural, vigorous, and persevering effort to remove the plague spot of slavery from the land, and secure the salvation of its down trodden victims."

The leading purpose of the author is "to stay the progress of schism," prevent secession, and hold the Church together on the Blot and no Bar Platform.

The first sixty-seven pages are occupied with the *Deliverances* of the General Assembly and the testimonies of Synods on the subject of slavery.—Chapters I and II.

In Chapters III and IV, making fifty pages, under the general head of "Position of the Assembly," the various acts and deliverances of that body, from 1787 to 1846, are examined and compared, and declared to be uniform, consistent and substantially the same.

"There is," says the author, "clearly an essential consistency and coincidence of parts in all the testimony borne by the Assembly at different periods from its formation until the present time. \* \* \* In 1846, the Assembly resolved, 'That the Act of 1845 was not intended to deny or rescind the testimony often borne by the Assembly previous to that date.' This must be regarded as tantamount to a reaffirmation of all the testimony which had previously been uttered."

"This point satisfactorily settled," viz.: that the entire "testimony of the Assembly is consistent with itself,"—the author proceeds "to inquire what is the precise position which the General Assembly have, by these acts assumed," and sums up as follows:

### THE ASSEMBLY'S PRECISE POSITION.

"That we may have a short, comprehensive and accurate view of this matter, we have condensed all the testimony of the Assembly into the following concise statements. We think they accurately set forth the position which the chief judicatory of our Church occupies on this important and difficult subject :

"1st. The Assembly have never asserted the absolute sinlessness of the relation of master and slave as it exists even among professing christians in the southern portion of this country. They simply declare that the abstract relation is not necessarily sinful.

"2d. Then, as the abstract relation is not necessarily sinful, the Assembly hold that the mere fact that any persons in the southern portion of this country sustain that relation, cannot, without regard to circumstances, be pronounced a sin, the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the Church of Christ; or in other words, that *slaveholding*, "under the circumstances in which it is found in the southern portion of the country," is not in itself "a bar to christian communion."

"3d. The system of slavery, or "the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human race by another," which is done under the slave system as it exists at the south, the Assembly declares "a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ." In the strongest and most unequivocal terms they condemn the whole system.

"4th. The Assembly also decidedly condemn all the specific evil features of the system. They forbid the members of the Church to regard their slaves as mere property, and not as human beings, rational, accountable, and immortal. They forbid the traffic in slaves for the sake of gain or convenience, the separation of husbands and wives, parents and children, and all cruelty of whatever kind in their treatment.

"5th. The Assembly also enjoin upon all the members of the Church who hold slaves to instruct them especially in the great doctrines of christianity; to cultivate in them habits of industry, economy, and management, such as will prepare them for the enjoyment of freedom; and to labor in the most prudent and effective way for the final abolition of slavery as speedily as possible; and to act towards them in the spirit of the golden rule, 'whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.'

"6th. The General Assembly moreover enjoin upon the Sessions and Presbyteries to strive to prevent the perpetration, by any of the members of the Church, of the wrongs authorized by the system; and promptly to visit any disregard of the prohibitions and injunctions stated above with discipline, even to the extent of the suspension of the offender from all the privileges of the Church, 'till he repent and make all the reparation in his power to the injured party.'"

In short, the mere legal relation they hold to be not necessarily sinful; they condemn the system. The wrongs authorized by it, they forbid upon the penalty of Church discipline; and they enjoin the duties which men standing in this relation to others owe them. Such we regard as the position taken, the doctrines held, and the prohibitions and injunctions given, by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in reference to that mournful evil, American slavery.

It will be manifest at a glance that this simple statement shows the utter falsehood of the charge shamelessly made, and unweariedly reiterated, that the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Church are pro-slavery. If to condemn in strong terms the whole system, to forbid indulgence by any of the members in

the wrongs authorized by it, to enjoin the discharge of all social and moral duties not recognized by it, decidedly to encourage efforts for its final abolition, and to pursue a course designed and adapted, by instructing both master and slaves in the great principles of the gospel, entirely to remove it in the safest manner—if to copy the example of the Apostles in circumstances somewhat similar—is to favor the system of slavery, then, and not otherwise, are the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Church pro-slavery.

Besides, the evidence adduced to establish this charge, when carefully examined, utterly fails. It is alleged that the Act of the Assembly of 1845 placed them upon new and pro-slavery ground. But do not the facts prove the contrary? The question before the Assembly was, "*Is slaveholding a sin which should exclude its perpetrator from the Church?*" The answer, as we have seen, was, "It is no bar to christian communion." The question was before the Assembly of 1795, "Ought a serious person, opposed to slavery, to hold communion with those who hold slaves and tolerate the practice in others?" And it was answered affirmatively. Are not these two decisions of the Assembly perfectly coincident? In the action of 1818 the same general sentiment is expressed in the following language. "*And we at the same time exhort others to forbear harsh censures and uncharitable reflections on their brethren, who unhappily live among slaves whom they cannot immediately set free, but who, at the same time are really using their influence, and all their endeavors, to bring them into a state of freedom, as soon as a door for it can be safely opened.*" Does not this distinctly imply that those who held slaves whom they could not immediately set free were still entitled to membership in the Church? 'that slaveholding, under the circumstances in which it exists in the southern portion of this country, is no bar to christian communion?' The doctrine taught in 1845 was not, therefore, either new or pro-slavery."—Pp. 74-77.

**"THE POSITION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ESSENTIALLY ACCORDING TO TRUTH AND RIGHT."**

Is the proposition argued at length in chapter IV? I shall give only a few extracts going to show the confidence which the author feels in the correctness of the Assembly's position, and in the *unanimity* of the whole Church, North and South, on this subject:

"If we have correctly stated the position held by the General Assembly of our Church, it is manifest that in many of its points all, at least at the North, can heartily concur. And the history of the Church shows that the southern portions of it, generally, regard that position as according to truth and right. In condemnation of the whole system of slavery which the Assembly has pronounced, all will cordially agree. Even an overwhelming majority of professors of religion, and a large proportion of those who are not professors, at the South, can heartily subscribe this condemnation. A system which reduces rational, accountable, immortal men to the condition of chattels; which chains, not only the body in hopeless bondage, but the soul under the darkness of an almost heathenish ignorance, shutting out, under severe penalties, the light of science and the gospel; \* \* \* can such a system be any other than 'utterly inconsistent with the law of God, totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ,' utterly and outrageously wrong? Surely it deserves the severest reprobation of all who love what is right, and pure, and good. Such essentially is the system of slavery which prevails in this fairest

and most highly blest American land. All the good men not entirely blinded by custom or interest, or prejudice, join the Assembly in its condemnation.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Equally will all accord with the correctness of the duties prescribed by the Assembly for those who are unhappily living under the system. To treat kindly their servants; to regard their feelings, rights, and relations; to educate, elevate and christianize, and prepare them for freedom, and ultimately, if practicable, to liberate them, and to labor for the universal abolition of slavery; these are the duties which commend themselves to the judgment and conscience of all reflecting men. Thus far, then, there is entire unanimity in the Church, with perhaps a very few unimportant exceptions, in concurring in the position of the General Assembly."—Pp. 83-85.

#### THE "TWO POINTS,"

##### *The Blot not in itself sinful; and therefore no Bar.*

The author defends with great earnestness what he calls "the two points in the position of the Assembly"—That "the abstract relation of master and slave is not in itself sinful;" and that, therefore, "the mere fact that any persons in the southern portion of this country sustain that relation, cannot, without regard to circumstances, be pronounced a sin, the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the Church of Christ." This he defends as "*the doctrine held by the Assembly.*"

That is, slavery, though "a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature and a blot on our holy religion" is not necessarily, in itself, and under all circumstances, a sin—And so the mere fact of "the existence of domestic slavery, under the circumstances in which it is found in the southern portion of the country, is no bar to christian communion."

In supporting the first *point*, the character of the abstract relation, "The great question here," says the author, is, what is this abstract relation? The answer is, "Let it be remembered that slavery is wholly a political institution—The relation is the creature of civil law, of positive enactment."—(P. 86.)

The appeal is made to the Bible on this "*point*" and the following conclusion reached:

"The conclusion then is inevitable that the New Testament does not condemn the mere relation of master and slave as necessarily and under all circumstances, sinful. A proper view of the relation itself, and of the teachings and practice of the Apostles in reference to it concur, therefore, in establishing the doctrine that it is not in its own nature, and under all circumstances, sinful."—P. 98.

CHAPTER V. gives "the action of the Presbyterian Church on behalf of the slaves," and is both interesting and instructive. I give the following extract:

"Of these three millions, [of slaves in the Southern States] it is supposed that there are about seventy thousand, or less than one-fortieth, owned by masters who are members of the Presbyterian Church. Taking all the slaveholding States together, it is probable that about one-third of the ministers, and one-half of the members of the Church, who are heads of families, own slaves.

"It is probable that the colored membership of the Southern Churches numbers sixty-seven thousand. \* \* \* They, [the slaves] have been to a great extent, civilized and enlightened, and elevated intellectually and morally far above the position they occupied when they were first brought to this country. Many of them have been liberated and assisted in securing a home in their

fatherland. Much advance has been made in the preparation of both master and slave, for the final and complete abolition of the whole system."—Pp. 168–170.

*"Denunciations against slaveholders by the abolitionists disapproved. The Assembly's more cautious methods best calculated to effect the final abolition of slavery."*

"The denunciation of a relation which may exist without guilt," or "the denunciation of men merely on account of slaveholding," the author considers a fatal mistake in the movement of "modern abolitionists." It is "the farthest possible from being favorable to efforts either for the emancipation or salvation of the slave." It only "rivets tighter his bonds."

"But on the other hand," the Church would avoid all "unnecessary excitement," preach the gospel to master and slaves, and so undermine and destroy the whole system of slavery. Convert the master, and bring his mind under the influence of the gospel, and "nothing short of entire emancipation can satisfy him." "And having done this," that is, having emancipated his own slaves, "he is prepared to argue the final abolition of the whole system."

"Sound reason, as well as Apostolic example shows, that the course pursued by the Presbyterian Church is right and wise; not only as it tends to secure the most important end first; but also as it is most beautifully adapted to bring about, peacefully and safely to all parties, the final abolition of the whole system of slavery."—P. 162.

"The actual results of the course pursued" by the Old School Presbyterian Church are deemed encouraging and full of promise for the cause of final and complete abolition. "Multitudes" have had their attention directed to the subject, and their hearts prepared for "the great end contemplated." The following is what is said as to the

#### SENTIMENTS OF THE PRESBYTERIANS OF THE SOUTH.

"There is a 'strong opposition to the system, and desire for its removal almost uniformly expressed by Presbyterians of the South. It is testified of the Presbyterians of Louisiana, that they generally feel opposed to slavery and desire its removal. Of the members of our Church in Virginia we are assured that they regard it as a great evil, which none feel more deeply, or more sincerely deplore, than those who are in the midst of it and see and feel its evils. The recent political struggle in Kentucky evinced the strong opposition of an immense majority of the Presbyterians of that State to the system, and their desire for its removal. Very similar is the feeling of those who reside in Tennessee. In a word, we are authorized to affirm that Presbyterians generally at the South, feel opposed to slavery, deplore its existence, and would rejoice in its extinction. There is, therefore, on the part of the members of the Church, a preparation more or less perfect for the adoption of any scheme of emancipation which may be devised by which slavery can be abolished without greater evils to master and slave than at present exists. And many have already liberated and assisted in colonizing their slaves.'"—P. 163.

Reader are these things so? You remember that Dr. Van Rensselaer says he believes his "beloved brethren at the South occupy the same *conservative* position" with himself; and that "so far as [he has] any personal knowledge of [his]

brethren in the Southern section of the Church, or [has] observed their proceedings in the General Assembly, [he has] yet to learn that they are disposed to depart from our *ancient* Presbyterian testimonies." (*Discussion on Slaveholding*, pp. 63, 136.) And it is a fact, proved by the Records, that every Southern man in the Assembly of 1846, ~~who~~ voted that the uniform testimony of the Church on the subject of slavery, during a period of nearly sixty years, is "true and capable of vindication from the word of God." And last May, in New Orleans, ~~was~~ not one solitary man from all the South, in the General Assembly there convened, dared to *see*, or *say* that he *saw*, any "occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith" of the Old School Presbyterian Church on this subject. Dr. Breckenbridge, the "*omnipotent*," wrote—Dr. Van Rensselaer, the Chairman of the Committee, reported—and the entire Assembly North and South, voted, "All right" on the subject of slavery.

Still, I ask, are these things so? Is this the *feeling* of "the Presbyterians of Louisiana, Kentucky and of those who reside in Tennessee, and of the Old School Presbyterians generally at the South?"

I cannot believe it, says the reader. Neither do I. But this I do believe: The silent acquiescence, the utter giving up of principle, on the part of the Old School Presbyterians of the South, as evidenced by their *votes* in the General Assembly, has done more to sustain and keep alive the abolition spirit of the North than the acts of any body of men in the Union.

CHAPTER VI. discusses at considerable length, and with great ability, the question, "*Are we of the Northern part of the Church so involved in the guilt of slavery, as it exists in the Southern portion, as to make secession a duty?*"

The Hand Book maintains the negative—showing that the process of reasoning by which the affirmative is attempted to be sustained, takes it for granted that "slavery is in itself sinful." Whereas, "It has already been made apparent that slaveholding is not necessarily sinful. If the relation of master and slave may be sustained without sin, the Assembly cannot be guilty in tolerating it," &c.

THE CHURCH, NORTH AND SOUTH, LIKE-MINDED. The "ONENESS of general feeling and interest between Northern and Southern Presbyterians," on the subject of slavery, and the proportional number of those in the church who are "anxious for its *abolition*," are thus presented:

"Has slaveholding become the permanent practice of the members of the Presbyterian Church? So far from it that slavery cannot be regarded as a permanent institution in our land. The great mass of the greatest and best men of our country look forward with deep solicitude to the day of its final abolition, and hope that it may not be very distant. We are safe in affirming that three-fourths of those members of the Church who reside in slaveholding States, are opposed strongly to the existence of the slave system, and anxious for its abolition. And it remains only because they have not the power, nor do they know how safely to remove it. And, if the whole Church be taken together, it may safely be asserted, that nine-tenths of its members are opposed to the existence of slavery, and are longing and praying for its removal. Can that be regarded as a permanent practice of the body, which is partially indulged by a small minority of the members, and to which such an immense majority are opposed, and for the removal of which they are laboring? It is manifest that slaveholding will cease the moment the system is abolished. And as so large a majority of the members of the Presbyterian Church are opposed to the system, and striving to bring about its removal, they are clearly laboring for the abolition of the relation itself. Slaveholding, then, cannot be regarded as a



permanent practice of any portion of the Presbyterian Church. But if slavery even had a permanent place in that part of the Church where the relation is now tolerated, that would not alter the case. A body is not to be characterized by any peculiarity of a small minority of its members. To involve all in guilt, and justify secession, the wrong must be the act of the body. Now a body acts only through its regularly constituted authorities. The Presbyterian Church acts through the General Assembly. But the General Assembly has never practiced slavery. It never will do so. It has never tolerated the slave system, or the evils connected with it, but has borne frequent and decided testimony against them. It has declared many of them offences worthy of discipline. It has urged the Church in every prudent and practicable way to hasten the complete abolition of the whole system. Most manifestly, then, slavery has never found toleration, nor has simple slaveholding ever been practiced by the Assembly, or become a permanent habit in any part of the Presbyterian Church. But until it does so, secession on that account must continue wholly uncalled for and unjustifiable."—Page 202, 203.

*Slavery a "mighty evil;" and the duty of every man to "exert his influence for its final abolition."*

"The system of slavery is an enormous evil politically and commercially.

\* \* \* \* \*

"In view of its political and social evil, no patriot or philanthropist can but long for its entire removal, and feel that he is bound to labor for this end. No lover of his species can look upon the degradation it brings upon the slave, and the temptation to moral degeneracy which it presents before the master, and not feel constrained to lift his voice, and exert his influence for its final abolition.

\* \* \* \* \*

"We are bound to bear testimony against the system with all its evils, as they exist either in Church or State, or both. Our influence, and every rational effort should be given, in the spheres in which we severally live and act, for its final destruction. \* \* \* \* \*

"As, therefore, we cannot innocently separate from the Presbyterian Church on account of slavery, so we cannot, without sin, remain in it and neglect to exert ourselves vigorously, both for the salvation of the slave, and the complete abolition of the entire system of slavery."—Page 222–224.

This is the **HAND BOOK** containing "the testimony and practice of the Presbyterian Church in reference to American Slavery." It is recommended by the moderators of four General Assemblies—among them, Dr. Rice, who drew up the Assembly's deliverance in 1845, and Dr. Van Rensselaer, Chairman of the Assembly's Union Committee in 1858. It is therefore no mean book. It cannot be set aside with a sneer or a shrug; nor can the force of its testimony be dodged by an affectation of indifference or contempt.

To those who have paid any attention to the testimonies and discussions in my *columns*, any attempt to specify, by number or by name, the *points* of value and significance here made, would seem to imply a doubt of the commonest powers of observation and discrimination in my readers. I therefore spare myself the trouble and the reader the annoyance, craving indulgence to a single suggestion only.

If "the position held by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church" has been "correctly stated," and if "the Southern portion of it generally regards that position as according to truth and right, and all cordially agree in the con-

*denunciation of the whole system of American Slavery*, which the Assembly has pronounced"—If "*three-fourths* of those members of the Church who reside in slaveholding States are opposed strongly to the slave-system, *and anxious for its abolition*."—"And, if, the whole church taken together, it may safely be asserted that *nine-tenths* of its members are opposed to the existence of slavery, longing and praying and laboring for its removal"—If such an immense majority of the members of the Presbyterian Church," *urged* by the Assembly, "in every prudent and practicable way to hasten *the complete abolition* of the whole system, are opposed to the system, striving to bring about its *removal*, and clearly laboring for the *abolition* of the relation itself"—Then, I think "it may be safely stated" that the public ought to know it. But if these things are not so, "we are safe in affirming" that the parties involved must disown or deny, protest or repudiate.

## FURTHER SPECIMENS OF OLD SCHOOL TACTICS.

### THE PRESBYTERIAN EXPOSITOR AND THE TRUE WITNESS.

"It is reported—and Gashmu saith it."—*Nehemiah* vi. 6.

I devoted a column to the Philadelphia Presbyterian, and I now devote this to the Presbyterian Expositor and the True Witness, not in the way of self-defence—for neither of these parties has offered anything which demands or deserves a rejoinder on that account—but solely that my readers may be informed of the peculiar style of discussion which Old School editors and writers seem to have agreed in adopting, whenever the *position* of their Church on the slavery question, is the subject of inquiry. I give these as specimens of Old School Tactics.

Dr. Rice, in a late number of his *Presbyterian Expositor*, has a long article, under the head of "Slavery—conflicting testimony," in which he seems to complain or to boast—it is hard to say which—that the Old School Presbyterian Church, in these latter days, "is called to bear a double share of reproach." He says:

"By certain men in the North, she is reproached as eminently *pro slavery*. \* \* \* By certain men in the South, she is reproached as decidedly *abolitionist*. \* \* \* The Editor of the Expositor, too, has the honor to be identified, by both these parties, with the church. Northern Abolitionists affirm that our position is that which the church occupies, and that we are pro-slavery. Southern pro-slavery men assert, that our position is that of the church, and that we are abolitionists—strangely enough these opposite and contradictory charges both come from New School Presbyterian ministers! The following extract, from an article in the New York Evangelist, gives the one side."

Here follow three paragraphs from the New York Evangelist, of December 23, introduced in this formal way, and with set phrase, to sustain the editor's statement "on the one side." The "testimony" utterly fails to do any such thing. The editors of the Evangelist do by no means allege that either the Old School Church, or Dr. Rice, is "eminently pro-slavery!" I quoted portions of the same

article from the Evangelist, in my column No. 10, (p. 61,) to prove the contrary. But as I am not concerned on that *side*, I shall leave the editor to the tender mercies of the editors of the Evangelist, and ask the reader's attention to our own *side* of Mason and Dixon.

Dr. Rice, with his logical seeming still upon him, and with a sort of serious, stiltistic, courtly style of displaying his "testimony," introduces—what do you suppose, good reader? Why, *the words* of those "certain men in the South," who have reproached the Old School Church and Dr. Rice as "*decidedly abolitionist*,"—we must have an extract from *them* to make the proof "on the other side," of course, say you.


Not a bit of it! He does not what no other respectable speaker or writer has ever dreamed of attempting, in violation of the first *law of evidence*, in all past time! ~~But~~ He with solemn pretence, and in utter contempt of the discernment of his readers, and with a strange disregard of the respect of all intelligent men, introduces an "extract from a letter from a friend," and gravely counts and claims *this* as "*the testimony* of New School ministers" in the South—the *testimony* on "the other side." Hear him thus:

"The following extract from a letter from a friend in the South, gives the other side:

"Rev. A. Newton, of Jackson, Miss., and Rev. Robert McLain, of Enterprise, Miss., are publishing in the secular papers what they call the Old School General Assembly's position on Slavery. They have, or do profess to take it from the Baird Digest, and very strongly insinuate, that it is an abolition body. They take the action of 1787, '93 and '95, and mix all these acts and deliverances in such a way, as to mislead and deceive the reader. Their publications are in the *Weekly News*, published by O. S. Holland, Enterprise, Miss. They insinuate that you and Dr. R. J. Breckenridge are in the abolition list; that you teach that slavery is an evil of immense magnitude; that you were the chairman of the committee that drew up the report on slavery in 1845, and said, that there is not one expression in the paper adopted in '45, that wears a pro-slavery appearance, or that will bear any such interpretation, &c.; and refer to your editorials in the *Saint Louis Presbyterian* of '56 and '57."

"Here," says Dr. Rice, "we have a humiliating spectacle."

Indeed we have: It is not only humiliating, but really disheartening, sickening, disgusting. But the master of the ring is himself the spectacle! The showman is himself the show! And I have missed the measure of the public virtue and intelligence, if he is not, before he leaves the stage, "the observed of all observers," the exposed of all expositors! Let all eyes be turned this way!

Behold the "*spectacle*" here exhibited on the pages of the Presbyterian Expositor! Dr. N. L. Rice, the editor, the scholar, and the logician—Dr. Rice, the celebrated theological disputant, himself and his Church being on trial, gravely brings before the Court "an extract from a letter from a friend," and asks the Court to accept that *hearsay* rumor "from a friend" as  "the testimony of certain men in the South," whom he does not, and dares not introduce, and confront in open Court, and who have not been heard at all in the case!

This miserable, bungling "extract from a letter from a friend" is held up, without a blush, an apology or a word of explanation, as "the testimony of two ministers!" No less than a dozen times, the defendant orator, in summing up and *expounding* the evidence and *driving* the argument as if in contempt of Court,

calls this hearsay extract, "the testimony" of two men, and "their testimony," and speaks of them as *testifying*, &c.

But I would have every reader judge for himself. After introducing the above extract, and thus closing "the testimony" in the case on both sides, the editor opens and proceeds with the argument as follows:

"Here we have a humiliating spectacle. We have before us the testimony of some *four* New School Presbyterian ministers. [The editors of the *Evangelist*, and Newton and McLain,] who profess to be well informed, respecting the position of the Presbyterian Church on a great moral question, and respecting the position of individual ministers. Two of them testify [by proxy, in the person or through the *pen* of a 'friend,'] that it is decidedly an abolitionist body, and that the ministers named [Breckenridge and Rice] are abolitionists. The others, editors of the *Evangelist*, testify that it is a decidedly pro-slavery body, under the influence of an 'extreme pro-slavery radicalism.' [They do no such thing, though that is not my 'side' of the case.]

"Two of these ministers testify, that we, the editor of the *Expositor*, are an abolitionist. The others assign us a position in the extreme pro-slavery ranks. [They do no such thing; but never mind *that side*.] What shall we say of this flatly contradictory testimony? From the most unscrupulous political editors, in the midst of the excitement of a pending election, we have seen nothing that exceeds it. The difference between pro-slaveryism and abolitionism is palpable as that between day and night; and it is not pretended that the language used by the Assemblies, or that used by *us*, is at all ambiguous. [No; but it is *cunningly devised*.] How then shall we account for these contradictory testimonies? We are willing to make large allowance for the influence of prejudice and envy. We can see how the fragment of the New School body in the South, denied admission into our General Assembly, [we have never desired or asked admission into their Assembly,] and on the point of extinction might desire to divide our church in the hope of getting into a Southern organization, which might be formed. \* \* \* Making all due allowance for envy and prejudice, we still feel great difficulty in accounting for this contradictory testimony."

"It is gratifying, however, to know that between the conflicting charges of these ecclesiastical demagogues, (we are sorry we can find no other appropriate word,) the truth is elicited, and the Presbyterian Church vindicated. The testimony of the Southern men proves that she is not a pro-slavery body. They are pro-slavery men; they know what pro-slaveryism is. \* \* \* Their testimony, therefore, is conclusive on this point, and the editors of the *Evangelist* are proved false accusers by their New School brethren in the South. The testimony of the *Evangelist* and of divers other papers proves that the Presbyterian Church is not an *abolitionist body*. They know what abolitionism is. Their testimony, therefore, is conclusive on this point; and the Southern men are proved false accusers by their New School brethren of the North. By the same testimony the editor of the *Expositor* is proved to be neither pro-slavery nor abolitionist; and both his Southern and Northern assailants are proved by each other to have grossly misrepresented him."

This is the way the man *talks* before the Court of public opinion! Testimony, testimony, conflicting testimony; two of these men testify, &c.! Shades of Starkey and Greenleaf! tell us: Is it thus your world-renowned labors are to be sported with and contemned!

"Making all due allowance," it is difficult to see or to say, how it was or why it was, that such a man as the editor of the *Expositor* could be tempted to place before his readers so silly a thing as this "extract from a letter from a friend."

The unmistakeable marks of utter stupidity, sticking out from every line of the "extract," could not have been unseen by the eagle-eyed champion of Old Schoolism.

Such a man as Dr. Rice ought to be ashamed to have introduced an "extract from a letter from a friend" as "the testimony of the Southern men" named. However *hard run* for testimony he may have been, he should not have presumed thus upon the ignorance of his readers. *Hearsay* testimony has been held in contempt by all mankind ever since the days of *Gashmu*.

Taking the "extract from a letter from a friend" to be "the testimony of the Southern men," justice to his "friend," and to the two "false accusers" who *sinned in him* and by him, forbade the misstatement and misrepresentation of "their testimony." *Gashmu* does not say that "two of these testify that it is decidedly an abolition body," or that "the Editor of the Expositor is an abolitionist." The "friend" only says they "strongly *insinuate* that it is an abolition body." Who, or what is *it*? Is *it* "the Baird Digest," "the Old School General Assembly's position?" Or is the Old School General Assembly *it*? I suppose it must be the Assembly. But *Gashmu* only says "they strongly *insinuate* that it is an abolition body."

So Dr. Rice perverts—absolutely *mistakes* the recorded "testimony *said* by *Gashmu*, in respect to himself and Dr. Breckenridge. "They *insinuate*," says the *record*, "that you and Dr. R. J. Breckenridge are in the abolition list." Out of the *insinuation* that he and Dr. Breckenridge are "in the abolition list," the editor helps himself to say, "Two of these ministers testify that the ministers named [Dr. Rice and Dr. Breckenridge] are abolitionists." And out of the *strong insinuation* that *it* is an abolition body." "Two of these ministers testify that it [the Presbyterian Church] is DECIDEDLY *an abolition body*."

But I must forbear. There is no use in following up this foul trail. Such an outrage upon the common law of evidence, and such "recklessness of statement" in the application and the argument, cannot be paralleled in the young remembrance of many of my readers. "From the most unscrupulous political editors, in the midst of the excitement of a pending election, we have seen nothing that exceeds this!" The *end*, however, is not yet. The worst is yet to come. Wait a moment.

Reader, we will pause here a moment, if you please. We have now arrived at the middle, or about the centre of the Expositor's article. But we have approached a *point* of chief significance, and are about to "get at the simple truth in the case." And as there is another party, a sort of *Tertium Quid*, very seriously involved, I propose to look back, and fetch up thus far, before proceeding to the denouement.

#### THE NEW ORLEANS TRUE WITNESS AN ACCOMPLICE.

*The True Witness*, of March 19, copies a large portion of Dr. Rice's article from the Expositor. The Editor chooses to introduce it under the head of "CONCLUSIVE TESTIMONY." Thus:

"The Christian Observer [of Philadelphia] says, if the Old School church is misrepresented on the question of slavery, *it is because its own official records misrepresent it*. Now is this true?"

[I will answer this question, with the reader's leave, right now, before proceeding with the "conclusive testimony" of the Witness. It may serve to show the *frame of mind* he is in. ANSWER, NO.—This is not true. The Christian

Observer ~~do~~ does not say, "if the Old School Church is misrepresented on the question of slavery, it is because its own official records misrepresents it." Here is what the Christian Observer says:

"If the Old School Assemblies are misrepresented in Dr. Newton's numbers, it is because their own *official records misrepresent them!*"—(See *Ch. Obs.* March 3, 1859.)

From the restricted, specific statement of the Observer, the Witness "designedly left" out the definitive, significant terms, "in Dr. Newton's numbers." He dared not controvert the *particular* proposition of the Observer. But he might safely enough question the truth of the *general* proposition which he made of it. We see his *mood*—we may now hear him further:]

"To make knowingly a false impression is just about as bad as it is to assert what is positively untrue. It seems to be a very easy thing to garble and misinterpret a record, for sectarian purposes, according to the climate in which we live."

[Well it does seem easy to some. But I have always supposed "the way of transgressors is hard." *Climate*, however, has a slackening effect on some systems.]

"Hence Northern New School look from one stand-point, and Southern New School from another, and thus they make the record to suit their purpose. Dr. N. L. Rice, after giving a quotation from each, says:"

The True Witness *leaves out* what he calls "a quotation from each," and commencing "Here we have a humiliating spectacle," &c., follows with a column or more from Dr. Rice's comment, argument, and lecture upon the "false accusers," who have so "grossly misrepresented him." The Expositor gives as "the testimony of some four New School Presbyterian ministers," the passage from the Evangelist, and "an extract from a letter from a friend in the South." He pronounces *the testimony conflicting*. The True Witness omits the testimony, and pronounces it "conclusive." The Expositor gives "an extract from a letter from a friend" as *the testimony* of "two of these ministers!" The True Witness calls this "extract from a letter from a friend" a "*quotation*" from "Southern New School!"

Surely blindness in part, at least, hath happened to Old School Expositors and Witnesses!

"Here we have a humiliating spectacle" indeed. In presenting it to my readers I am actuated by no motives of resentment or self-gratification. Nay, my bosom is stirred by mingled emotions of sorrow and shame for the sake of our common Christianity and our common humanity.

Two Old School Presbyterian ministers, editors, the Presbyterian Expositor and the True Witness, one North and one South, linked and leagued! The one, presuming upon an utter want of discernment on the part of his readers, offers a shabby "extract from a letter from a friend" as "the testimony of certain men!" The other, afraid to risk the discernment of his readers, and desiring to outstrip his *confriar*, holds back "the testimony," the "extract from a letter from a friend," and boldly calls it "*a quotation!*"—a quotation from "Southern New School!"—"The most unscrupulous political editors," so far as I have observed, are not in the habit of attempting such strokes as this.

Having traced the Expositor and the Witness, and brought them up even and

together at this point, where "the truth" is elicited and the "Presbyterian Church vindicated," I ask the reader's special attention to "the conclusion of the whole matter," given in a single paragraph of the *Expositor*, in which Dr. Rice "gets at the truth," arrives at, and defines his position and that of his church. The paragraph is in immediate continuation of the passage given above. The Witness endorses "the testimony," tells of the *quotations*, gives the argument, and joins in the vituperation with the *Expositor*, but *bolts* at the conclusion, and suppresses the passage altogether! It is as follows:

*Dr. Rice defines his position and that of the Old School Church. The True Witness suppresses the paragraph lest his readers should "get at the simple truth in the case."*

"Now, we get at the simple truth in the case. Pro-slaveryism teaches, that slavery is not an evil, but a blessing, and ought, therefore, to be perpetuated. Neither the General Assembly nor the editor of the *Expositor* ever uttered such a sentiment. Abolitionism teaches, that slaveholding is sinful in itself; or, at least, that it is *prima facie* evidence of sin, requiring the slaveholder to prove himself innocent. Neither the General Assembly nor the editor of the *Expositor* ever uttered such a sentiment. These are the two extremes, equally false, and equally mischievous. The General Assembly has spoken of slavery in this country as wrong in its origin, and as a complicated evil, the removal of which should be desired and sought as the providence of God opens the way; but that body has denied that slaveholding is necessarily sinful, or that the bare fact of slaveholding should be made a bar to Christian fellowship. The editor of the *Expositor* has stated and defended the same doctrine, over and over, in the slaveholding and in the free States, for twenty-five years."

Here, though there is a manifest shyness of expression, an evident *clipping* and *holding back*, unbecoming such a man on such a subject, Dr. Rice places himself precisely where I first found him and last left him. I understand him fully. I never have misunderstood him, nor misrepresented him. His *hobby* of the "two extremes" is a wooden horse of his own manufacture—*monstrum horrendum, informe*—"equally false and equally mischievous," as the *trick* which, by means of simulated vows and long faces, was cheated into the walls of ancient Troy. No such extremists as he describes are to be found in the Presbyterian Churches either North or South. Dr. Ross and Dr. Armstrong, in the South, are not. Mr. Barnes and Dr. Montfort, in the North, are not.

The pro-slaveryism which he defines was never charged against him or his church by the editors of the *Evangelist*, or any one else. He knows that the Southern members of the N. S. Assembly, in their *paper*, signed and formally read before that body in 1857, in the crisis of their separation, explicitly, individually and unanimously disavowed their belief in any such *pro-slaveryism*. See *my Col. No. 8*. (Pp. 37, 38.)

The *abolitionism* which he defines and discards with so much apparent earnestness on his own account and in behalf of the Church, was never suspected or alleged against him or his Church, by either of the *two certain men in the South*, or by any body else. I have uniformly considered and represented both him and the Church, as occupying the very position which he now defines and claims for himself and his Church. I have anticipated him, and have met and exposed the very quirks and dodges which are here mustered forth again. See *my Columns Nos. 12 and 13, and also No. 6*. (Pp. 68-80, 20-21.)

"Abolitionism teaches," says Dr. Rice, "that slaveholding is sinful in itself. Neither the General Assembly nor the editor of the *Expositor* ever uttered such a sentiment."

Is it possible! And who ever said they did?

"But that body has denied that slaveholding is *necessarily* sinful, or that the *bare fact* of slaveholding should be made a bar to Christian fellowship."

Is it possible! How liberal! How "satisfactory to all Southern men!" This is the very extent of the margin conceded to the South by the deliverance of 1845. And such a concession! Not sinful in itself! Not necessarily sinful! Not a sin without regard to circumstances! Not under all circumstances, a heinous sin, the renunciation of which should be made a bar to Christian communion! The *bare fact* of slaveholding no bar!

Conscience! All this solemn parade and everlasting denial that slaveholding is sinful in itself, is mere froth and foam. Who holds that the *bare fact* should be a bar? No body. The Methodist Church North do not. The New School Presbyterian Assembly North do not. Henry Ward Beecher and the Independent do not. The editors of the New York Evangelist, Dr. Rice's "false accusers" of the Northern side, do not. Dr. Monfort, the Presbyterian, does not. ~~But~~ And yet Dr. Rice calls these, *abolition* bodies, and these men *abolitionists*!

This is the grossest fraud that ever was attempted to be played off before a serious and earnest community. Dr. Rice contrives to get himself and his church charged with abolitionism. His *proxy proof* utterly failing to do any thing but "insinuate" something about an "abolitionist list," like one possessed, he recklessly ventures the desperate experiment of charging himself!

"Two of these ministers testify, [or ought to; I wonder they don't I wish they would] that we, the editor of the *Expositor*, are an abolitionist" "Two of them testify" that [the Old School Presbyterian Church] is decidedly an abolitionist body, and that the ministers named [in 'their testimony,' viz: Breckenridge and Rice,] are abolitionists."

Horrible! exclaims Dr. Rice, as if impelled by a holy horror and indignation—"False accusers!" They have "grossly misrepresented" us and our church! "Abolitionist!" "Decidedly abolitionist!" Why "abolitionism teaches that slaveholding is *in itself* sinful." I never thought of believing such a thing! "Neither the General Assembly, nor the editor of the *Expositor* ever uttered such a sentiment!"

Dr. Rice seems to be really *possessed* with the idea of being *falsely accused*. He covets the blessing of the gospel pronounced on those against whom "men say all manner of evil *falsely*"—and when he cannot find a *friendly* Gashmu, who "saith it" to suit him, he "saith it" himself!

From this point, where the editor says, "we get at the simple truth in the case," the *Expositor* proceeds at considerable length to lecture and tauntingly advise the New School; and concludes with saying some very hard words against Dr. Montfort, and showing that the Old School Church is reproached even by "her own sons."

The Witness gives his readers a very large dose of the lecture and the abuse; but *leaves out* whatever is not suited to the climate. The reader who deems the subject of sufficient interest to be investigated, will, I hope, get both the documents and compare them. I was astounded to find that in the center of about two hundred lines, taken from the *Expositor*, the *True Witness* had left out the above paragraph of a few lines (on p. 96,) in which the author says, "we get at the simple truth in the case."



It does really seem that this paragraph was "designedly left out," lest we should "get at the simple truth." The more carefully you examine the passage, the deeper will this conviction be fastened upon your mind. There is manifestly too much *truth* in this paragraph to suit the *True Witness*. He therefore suppresses it, and proceeds as if all were fair and right behind.

I do not care to add to what I have heretofore shown to be the real position of Dr. Rice, or of the Old School Presbyterian Church, on the subject of Slavery and its abolition. Those who have read my columns cannot mistake it. It is really "humiliating," and yet it is suggestive and worth recollecting, that this same editorial *We*, the *Expositor*, believes that slavery is "an evil of immense magnitude"—that the action of the Assembly of 1845, is "in perfect harmony" with that of 1818—that both are "in full force" to-day—he says of the action of 1818, "I endorse every word of it"—"holding every word of it in its plain literal meaning." He holds that slavery is a "blot on our holy religion, a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, utterly inconsistent with the law of God and totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ—and that it is manifestly the duty of all Christians, to use their honest, earnest and unwearied endeavors, as speedily as possible, to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the *complete* ABOLITION of slavery, throughout Christendom, and, if possible, *throughout the WORLD*."

As to Dr. Breckenridge's *position*, I have already given ample evidence in his own words in my column No. 9, (pp. 51-53.) I should not add to the strong testimony there given, if his name had not been thus thrust before me, and the charge of *gross misrepresentation* insultingly cast into my teeth.

Ordinarily, the opinion or position of an individual on a particular question, is a matter of no great consequence; except it may be deemed as, in some degree, an index to the sentiments of the body to which he is a member. To us of the South-West, the sentiments of such a man, on a question vitally affecting our interests personal, social, moral, and political, cannot but be a subject of deep anxiety. And this, not only because he is "omnipotent in the Assembly," but especially because he is the *Chief* of the Professors in the Theological Seminary at Danville, Kentucky. From this fountain the streams are to flow which shall run through every neighborhood throughout all our borders. From the pockets of slaveholders, the funds are drawn to feed and to sustain this institution. If the chief Professor holds slaveholding to be "clear robbery" and slaveholders to be no better than *pick-pockets* and *horse-thieves*, our public must surely be concerned to know it.

I have not testified that Dr. Breckenridge is either "decidedly" or "pre-eminently" an abolitionist. I am not so particular about mere *words* and *names*, as his friend Dr. Rice seems to be. My readers, I take it for granted, are competent to give appropriate names to the *things* that they see—and on this subject it has been my pleasure to concede this privilege to others.

Dr. Breckenridge, so far as I know has neither denied nor disowned the position in which I have placed him before my readers in my column of January 5th, (p. 51,) though I sent him the paper containing it, on the day of its publication. He will neither deny nor disclaim the sentiments or the language which I am now about to quote:

Dr. Breckenridge holds, and has solemnly recorded his belief that

"Slavery is an evil of enormous magnitude, both personal and social. Nature, and reason, and religion unite in their hostility to this system of folly and crime.


Undeniably, it is contrary to the revealed will of God; and so the General Assembly of our Church have solemnly, and righteously, and repeatedly ordained."—See "*Hints on Colonization and Abolition*," in the *African Repository* for January 1834, Vol. IX., No. 11, page 327.

I shall only add, for the satisfaction of those who may question his claim to a "constant and unalterable faith," an extract from a letter of Dr. Breckenridge as published in the "*Hand Book on the Slavery Question*," in 1852.

In the preparation of the Hymn Book—recently adopted in the Presbyterian Church, says the author of the Hand Book—a single verse of a certain hymn containing anti-slavery sentiments was omitted. It was charged that the omission was made under the influence of pro-slaveryism. In reply to this imputation, Dr. Breckenridge, after expressing his firm conviction that the Northern members of the committee could have had no desire to "favor slavery," or to promote the interests of that unhappy institution," thus defends himself:

"My brother and myself, the only Southern members of the committee, who participated largely in its labors, it is well known, never considered slavery in any other light than as an institution hostile to the rights, the duties, the happiness, and the interests of mankind; and, therefore, no two men on earth were less likely to do the act which, it appears, some are reckless enough to charge us with."—*Hand Book on Slavery*, page 78.

I do not question the *right* of any man to hold and to express such sentiments on the subject of slavery. Indeed, I make no objection to the sentiments themselves. Nor is it of any consequence to me to be told, what I have for many years understood to be a fact—that Dr. B. is himself a slaveholder. My business is not to judge either his faith, or his works; but to ascertain and make evident to my readers his sentiments on the subject of slavery, and of Church action in regard to it. Such has been the object of my inquiry in reference to the Old School Presbyterian Assembly. It is with the public to say what use is to be made of the *facts* which have been demonstrated.

Dr. R. J. Breckenridge, says he "never considered slavery in any other light than as an institution hostile to the rights, the duties, the happiness, and the interests of mankind.—"It is contrary to the revealed will of God; and  so the General Assembly of our Church have solemnly, and *righteously* and *repeatedly* ORDAINED."

Are Southern Old School Presbyterians content to entrust the theological and moral training of their sons for the holy office of the ministry to a man who holds such sentiments as these? Are the slaveholders of the South-West, whether in or out of the church, content to be taxed with an annual contribution of thousands upon thousands in support of an institution under the control of such a Head as this? It is from such a school as this that our Old School Presbyterian churches and congregations are to be supplied with religious teachers? Shall men take fire into their bosoms, and hope to escape burning?

## REFLECTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, AND FINISHINGS. SINGLE THOUGHTS, AND SINGLE SHOTS.

I have not discussed the subject of slavery. I have not written on that subject. Those who have found fault with me for agitating the question of slavery have not read my columns, or have done me and themselves very great injustice. I have *agitated* nothing but the question of *agitation* in the Old School Presbyterian Church. I have discussed nothing but the question of their "exact position" on the subject of slavery and of ecclesiastical intervention and *agitation*.

*My method* secures the reader from imposition and deception—I have all along supposed myself dealing with *men*, and not with mere blocks. I have uniformly dealt in particulars and details, giving dates, names, and pages, quotation signs, &c.; and have thus always furnished the *means* whereby the reader may discover, detect and expose an error if committed, a mutilated extract or a misrepresentation, if made. To a writer who has pursued this method, the weekly howlings and vain complaints of certain editors and talkers about *garbled extracts, false interpretations, gross misrepresentations*, and all such indefinite slang and pointless imputations, are as so many oaten straws thrown against the cliffs of Dover.

*My spirit*.—I have not interlarded my *columns* with flattering unctious; nor plastered them with whining apologies; nor attempted to support them by "sac-counenance" appeals to Heaven. Whether my *columns* shall stand or fall, I shall have the satisfaction of reflecting that not one of them is *disfigured*, either in base, shaft or capital, by this cheap paint of hypocrisy. I know that the men of facial longitude and sepulchral chests will exclaim, as some have already eked from their groaning bosoms: *A bad spirit—too bitter! No religion—no pious manifestations!*

Well, if it is so, it must be so. I cannot help it. In the review, no change in this respect suggests itself to my mind as desirable. I never could fancy a *talking* religion. It is cheap enough, to-be-sure, if one could *afford* to use it at all. I cannot. I was early taught to repeat, and to respect, the solemn interdiction, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." The Book of Esther is a good book, divinely inspired and true, and well adapted to its end; though it does not mention the name of the Divine Being. My subject was not religion; but "the exact position" of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly on slavery. I have been looking after a matter of *fact*. I have found it, and have handed it over to my readers. It is with them to say what *use* shall be made of it.

*Cui bono?* What good? What advantage are we to obtain, by ascertaining the "exact position" of the Old School Assembly?

I answer, Much every way. Something is gained, even by awakening the attention of the masses of the church and the public to the position of *such* a body of citizens on *such* a subject. Their "exact position" has not heretofore been known by our people generally. Their position, as I have exhibited it from their own showings, cannot be satisfactory to a Southern public. I feel confident that it is very far from being agreeable to themselves. Some Moses, or Joshua,

perhaps be induced to rise up and lead them out of the wilderness into which they have wandered. At least the Southern portion of the church must enter their *dissent*, and repudiate the *deliverances* which we have been reviewing; or forfeit the respect and confidence of a Southern community. Acquiescing as now and heretofore, they are supporting the abolition fires of the North, both in the church and in the State. They are still nurturing the hope, and sustaining the belief so disastrous in its influence on the Northern mind, and so confidently boasted of, "That three-fourths of those members of the church who reside in slaveholding States, are opposed strongly to the slave system and *anxious for its abolition*."

What the Southern public want, what we demand, and what we are bound to have, and that right early, is *open and fair dealing*—Compromising editors, and ambitious leaders, and public bodies must cease to "skulk behind the subterfuge of art"—A full stop to all darkening lights, hiding exhibitions, double-tongued talk, and delphic deliverances.

*The Mum Plot.*—The singularly awkward and ineffectual attempt, on the part of the Old School Press, to hold still, keep dark, and wear before the public the ill-fitting visor of indifference and contempt; and the studied caution and non-committal policy of ministers and leading members of the church, are the result of a *plot* to dodge the issue which they dare not meet.

I have had evidences of the existence of such a plot for sometime past, and from different States. But it will avail them nothing. The people have laid up these things in their hearts. The public judgment, in many quarters, is already made up. This wrapping themselves up in the cloak of affected indifference, or shrugging of the shoulders with a sneer of contempt, is well enough understood. The people's verdict has not been rendered: but it is ready, and will be given whenever an *occasion* shall call for it.

The *weight* of my columns has been owing to my earnest desire to furnish to my readers the *data* upon which to make a judgment in the premises, each for himself. I have preferred, that every reader, journeying this way, should take his own steps, travel by day-light, and arrive at his own conclusions. For this reason, I have quoted liberally and extensively from Old School records and writers—more extensively I fear, than prudence and a wiser discretion would have dictated. This has made my articles entirely too long, and I have no doubt, in many instances, wearisome to the reader. I have regretted it more than any one else; and my only consolation is in hope that my Old School friends will—if the public do not—thank me for the wider circulation which I have thus given to their deliverances, principles and arguments; and that, however little they seem to have studied it heretofore, they may, some day, learn to understand the law of reciprocity.

*The secular papers* have been resorted to—it is objected—and an attempt is made to bring the out-side pressure of public opinion in the South to bear upon the Old School Presbyterian Church.

And why may not this be done for the very best of reasons, and without the slightest desire to cast odium on that church? If the perverse public opinion of the North has been pressed into the service of error, and made to goad up the churches of different denominations to their late measures of extravagant folly—

why may not the sober, sound and scriptural public opinion of the South be appealed to in the cause of truth and righteousness, to break the spell of tame acquiescence and vain compromises in a powerful body of *men*, and to wake them up from their dreams of wide-spread influence and conquest, to a stern sense of *duty* to truth and the right, to themselves and the church, to God and their country?

*The traffic in slaves "for gain," and for the sake of "filthy lucre."*—This is peremptorily forbidden and condemned by the Old School Assembly of '45. Why do they not forbid the *traffic* in women? Are none of the members of the church in the North, in danger of entering into marriage bonds, for the sake of "filthy lucre?" We hear of no testimony against "the evil" of matrimony! And merchants, mechanics, physicians and lawyers,—do not multitudes of them toil hard, and toil long, rising up early and sitting up late, "for gain?" Should not the Assembly slack off a moment from slavery-amelioration, and get up a solemn deliverance, once in a century, against these "evils?"

The Assembly is *partial* and is a *respector of persons and classes*; and in this, they have adopted the *singularism*, if not the fanaticism of all abolitionists. They are greatly exercised about the condition of the slaves in the South. To "ameliorate their condition, they seem to think the great end of their mission. *Ameliorate, ameliorate, ameliorate!* This is well enough *in itself*, but not so well *by itself*. Why not give us an occasional deliverance about ameliorating the condition of the poor—the wives and children of heartless husbands and cruel fathers, whose crushed hearts and lacerated bodies send up the voice of blood, and cry to Heaven for vengeance from every city, town and county in the North!

*No union* mutually satisfactory—it is plain to all my readers—could take place between the United Synod and the Old-School General Assembly, so long as that Assembly maintains its present position on the subject of slavery and the *jurisdiction* of the Church over it.

We have been reproached as arrogant, impudent and presumptuous, because, being the weaker party, we ventured boldly before that august body, and in honest simplicity laid down our terms definitive, and declared these terms "*indispensable* to an honorable union on our part." But nothing could have been more fitting, and natural, and proper. Little Rhode Island is as much an independent sovereignty as the Empire State. The United Synod of Presbyterians in the South are a *people*, a body ecclesiastic—however feeble or few, yet equally an independent sovereignty with the Old School General Assembly. And by how much the weaker the one party is than the other, by so much the more must they see to it, that their rights and privileges are protected by the guaranties of the Constitution, and secured from invasion, as far as may be, in the terms of the compact. The stronger party might protect themselves, as they had done before, by the number of their votes.

*Anti-Slavery Crusade*.—The Old-School Presbyterian Assembly say, It is manifestly *the duty* of all Christians to labor earnestly, honestly, and without ceasing, to obtain, as speedily as possible, the complete abolition of slavery throughout christendom, and if possible throughout the world. When, in 1846, this sentiment, as well as others which have been uttered by the Assembly during a

period of sixty years was avouched as "true and capable of vindication from the word of God,"—every member from the South voted it "*true!*"

How many members of the Church in the South are honestly engaged in this *manifest duty* of all christians? How many have been thus *Wilberforced* into a *crusade* against slavery throughout christendom and throughout the WORLD? If *any*, speak. The *Hand-Book* feels "safe in affirming that three-fourths of those members of the Church who reside in slave-holding States are strongly opposed to the slave system and anxious for its ABOLITION."

*Force and value of the Assembly's deliverances.*—Apologists for the anti-slavery deliverances of the Church have attempted to hide behind the fact, that the acts and testimonies of the Assembly are not *the law* of the Church, and that they are not *binding* on the consciences of members. "The most that can be said of them," say they, "is that they express the views at the time of that body." There is "not a word on this question in the standards, the Confession of Faith and Catechisms."

True.—As I have repeatedly stated and clearly shown in these columns; and therefore, it is, as I have contended, that all such deliverances are null and void *de jure*. The question is one over which the Assembly have no *jurisdiction*. Deliverances on the subject of slavery are, in the language of the United Synod, ~~not~~ "*inappropriate to the functions of the Church of Christ.*" The Church has no *right to meddle* with it. Christ and his Apostle did not. But the Old School General Assembly *do*.—And to offer as an excuse, or an apology for their action, that it is unauthorized and unconstitutional, and therefore of no force, and not binding, only makes the matter worse!

No man could have a clearer or more thorough conviction of the unconstitutionality and utter nullity of the Assembly's deliverances on the question of slavery than I have. And yet I have not hesitated to speak of these acts as the Old School Assembly and Old School Presbyterians themselves speak of them.

The Assembly of 1846 say, "Our Church"—not *that body*, not the members of the Assembly *at the times* referred to—but, "*Our CHURCH* has from time to time, during a period of nearly sixty years, expressed its views on the subject of slavery."—The Assembly of 1858 say, they "see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith of (their) CHURCH" on the subject of slavery. No body had asked, or suggested any *revision* of the Constitution, the Confession or the Catechisms. *The Faith* of the church on the subject of slavery is *outside* of the Confession! *The views of the church, the sentiments* "substantially the same," expressed and uttered "during a period of nearly sixty years," all "solemnly and deliberately spoken" and avouched as "true and capable of vindication from the word of God"—*these* are what the church *believes*, and *these* constitute what the General Assembly of 1858, in New Orleans, unanimously declared to be "*the constant and unalterable FAITH*" of the Old School Presbyterian Church on the subject of slavery.

Dr. BRECKENRIDGE says; "The institution of slavery is, undeniably, contrary to the revealed will of God, and SO the General Assembly of our church has solemnly and righteously, and *repeatedly* ORDAINED."

Quoting the "sentiments" expressed in the deliverance of 1818, he says "These are the PRINCIPLES of the Presbyterian CHURCH in the United States of America."

The *Philadelphia Presbyterian* says the Acts of 1818 and 1845 "express THE MIND of the CHURCH;" and that "these are LEGISLATIVE ENACTMENTS." See *Column 9*, (p 46.)

Dr. Monfort, the Presbyterian, speaking of the deliverance of 1818, calls it "the DOCTRINE of our church." (See the Presbyterian of April 21, 1859.) And in reply to Mr. Marshall's question as to the binding authority of that deliverance, he says, "Binding? Yes sir, BINDING! and if all the New School men in the South were to be added to us, there would not be the least prospect of repealing it."—*Presbyterian of the West*, Aug. 6, 1857.

Dr. RICE says "The Assembly of 1846, declared that paper [the action of 1845] to contain substantially the same SENTIMENTS which our CHURCH had expressed during the period of nearly sixty years, leaving the testimony of preceding Assemblies IN FULL FORCE."—See *this, and more, in my Column—No. 6*, (page 21.)

Thus we see the *style* of expression adopted by the Assembly itself, and by leading men, editors and writers. The style is decidedly Old-Schoolish. No sound constitutional Presbyterian ever adopts this style. Here we have the Assembly's deliverances on the subject of slavery, styled the views, the sentiments, the principles, the testimony, the legislative enactments, the doctrine and the Faith of the CHURCH.

It makes no difference, so far as this discussion is concerned, whether there is any *law* of the church on slavery, or not. Our inquiry has been for the "exact position" of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly. Laws or deliverances, sentiments or principles, doctrines or faith—that position is now patent.

## APPENDIX.

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### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITED SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

*Adopted at their first Meeting in Knoxville, Tenn., April, 1858.*

WHEREAS, in the Providence of God, we, the representatives of Presbyteries heretofore in connection with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, have been constrained by a regard to our convictions of duty to ourselves, to the Church of Christ, and to our entire country, to withdraw from said General Assembly, and to form a separate ecclesiastical judicatory, under the name of the "United Synod of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," to be possessed of powers similar to those recognized in the Confession of Faith as belonging to the General Assembly; and whereas, it seems to be necessary, in order to avoid misapprehensions of our position, both now and hereafter, that we should place upon permanent record a statement of the principles which have governed us in forming a separate organization; therefore,

*Resolved*, That this "United Synod" make the following *Declaration of Principles*, as, in their judgment, in accordance with the Word of God and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and as essential to the peace, unity, and permanent prosperity of the Presbyterian Church in this land :

1. We declare our agreement in, and approbation of, the Westminster Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and also our adherence to the Form of Government and Book of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in these United States.

In thus adopting the Westminster Confession of Faith, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures, we adopt it in the sense in which we believe the Fathers of the American Presbyterian Church received it, to wit: not as requiring an agreement in sentiment with every opinion expressed in said Confession, but a belief in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and in the doctrines which distinguish the Calvinistic system from the Pelagian, Socinian, Arminian, and other systems of Theology. This system we understand to include the following doctrines, namely: the Trinity, the Incarnation and Supreme Deity of Christ, the Fall and Original Sin, Atonement, Justification by Faith, Personal Election, Effectual Calling, Perseverance of the Saints, Eternal Happiness of the Righteous, and Eternal Punishment of the Wicked. Whilst various modes of stating and explaining these truths may be adopted, yet when they are



received according to the usual way of interpreting language, and as they have been understood by the great body of the Presbyterian Church in this country, from the period of the adoption of the Westminster Confession in 1729 to the present day, the requisitions of the Confession of Faith are complied with, and all such persons are to be regarded as having received as their doctrinal creed, this system of doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures.

2. It is a fundamental principle of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, that no judicatory, or minister, or private member, can be censured or condemned, or excluded from church privileges, by any court of the Church, for doctrinal sentiments expressed, or for practices that the court may regard as sinful, and inconsistent with the requirements of the Confession of Faith, without a process of trial, such as is prescribed in said Constitution. To censure or condemn individuals or judicatories for heresy or crime is a judicial act; and, if a court of the Church has the constitutional right, in any case, to condemn or cut off from the Church, members or judicatories, for heresy or crime, *without trial*, it can be exercised whenever, in their judgment, said members or judicatories are guilty of teaching heresy or practicing immorality; and thus the Constitution would not only be inconsistent with itself, but it would sanction the violation of the principles of common justice, which are recognized in every civilized country in the world.

3. According to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly is an advisory and judicial body. It possesses no legislative power in the proper acceptance of the term. It cannot enact laws that are binding upon the lower judicatories. The Constitution expressly provides that all ecclesiastical rules or changes in the Constitution, shall receive the approval of a majority of the Presbyteries before they can be obligatory upon the churches. This "United Synod," therefore, disclaims the right to legislate, or to make laws upon any subject that will be binding upon the lower judicatories, or upon any portion of the Presbyterian Church.

4. In virtue of their advisory capacity, the different judicatories of the Presbyterian Church can testify against what they may regard as heresies and immoralities prevailing in the community. But they have no power to bear their testimonies against judicatories, or ministers, or private members of the church, for teaching heretical sentiments or practicing immoralities. The testifying and judicial powers of Church judicatories are distinct. They cannot perform a *judicial* act in their *advisory* capacity. To *individualize*, in the form of testimony, judicatories, or ministers, or private members, as guilty of heresy or immorality, is assuming their guilt without proof or trial. This "United Synod," therefore, whilst they recognize the right of the judicatories of the Church, in a *judicial* capacity, to prosecute ministers and private members for heresy and crime, in the way prescribed by the Book of Discipline, affirm that it would be a palpable violation of the spirit and letter of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, for any judicatory, in its advisory capacity, to bear its testimony against other judicatories, or ministers, or private members, for supposed heresy or crime, and without such a judicial process as is specified in the Book of Discipline.

5. In the judgment of this "United Synod," nothing can be made the basis of

discipline in the Presbyterian Church, which is not *specifically* referred to in the Constitution of the Church as crime or heresy. The Westminster Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, contains what we believe to be essential to truth and morality. Presbyterians profess to be governed by *Constitutional law*, as it is developed in the Confession of Faith, and not by the opinions of a Session, or Presbytery, or Synod, or General Assembly, further than they act in a judicial capacity with respect to matters distinctly referred to in said Confession. A departure from this principle, and a recognition of the right of an ecclesiastical judicatory to decide what is heresy or crime, when there is no allusion in the Confession of Faith to that which is so regarded, would be tantamount to making the judicatory, instead of the Confession of Faith, the standard of truth and morality; and, as the decision of one judicatory cannot bind another, there might be as many different opinions in reference to the supposed heresy or crime, as there are judicatories in the Church. This "United Synod," therefore, deny the right of any judicatory of the Presbyterian Church to make anything a subject of discipline which, according to the usual mode of interpreting language, and the manifest intent of the framers of the Confession, is not *specifically* referred to in the Constitution of the Church.

6. As slaveholding, or the relation between master and slave, is not referred to in the Confession of Faith, either directly or indirectly, as an offence, it cannot, *in itself considered*, in any case, be made the basis of discipline in the Presbyterian Church. At the same time, we declare the right of the Church courts to take cognizance, in their judicial capacity, of cruelties practiced in this and other relations in life. The Confession of Faith gives to Church judicatories the power to discipline members of the Church for cruelties, whether they occur in the parental or any other relation, implying, in the language of the Confession, superiors and inferiors.

7. Inasmuch as slaveholders were admitted into the churches organized by the Apostles, and as neither Christ nor his Apostles intimated that the slaveholding relation was a sin, although they lived in the midst of the institution, and enjoined upon masters to treat their slaves with kindness, it follows, necessarily, that a Church court that makes slaveholding, *in any case*, a bar to communion, is usurping authority that belongs only to the Great Head of the Church. Such a court would be legislating where Christ has not legislated. It would be prescribing terms of membership, which the Son of God himself did not prescribe, notwithstanding he was surrounded by slaveholders. This Synod denies that any ecclesiastical judicatory has the power to make terms of membership which neither Christ nor his Apostles recognized, when placed in similar circumstances as respects the existence of the slaveholding relation.

8. Inasmuch as neither the Saviour nor his Apostles intimated that the slaveholding relation was sinful, and as they did not attempt to remove slaveholders from the Church by legislation, or by testifying against it; and, further, as the system of slavery is an institution of the State, its continuance or abolition depending entirely upon the will of the State, irrespective of the views and decisions of Church courts, it is the opinion of this Synod that the discussion or agitation of slavery in the judicatories of the Church, except so far as respects the moral and religious duties growing out of the relation of master and slave,

is inappropriate to said judicatories. This Synod, representing Presbyteries that have withdrawn from their former ecclesiastical connection, because of the repeated and unconstitutional action on slavery by the General Assembly, therefore declares that under the present Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, the agitation of slavery in any of our judicatories, or further than pertains to the moral and religious duties arising from the relation, would be inconsistent with the design of our withdrawal from our former connection, and in forming a separate organization. Whilst, then, we propose no alteration of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, believing that, as it now stands, the spirit of it is against the agitation of slaveholding in the Church, we express the opinion that those who unite with us, or who may come after us, will be under a moral obligation, so long as the Constitution remains as it is, to exclude slavery, the agitation of which has already divided three large denominations in this country, as a subject of discussion, from the Church courts.

9. Entertaining the above views, and disclaiming all responsibility for and endorsement of the actions, resolutions, and testimonies of past General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church, whereby suspicions and doubts of the good standing and equal rights and privileges of the slaveholding members of the Church, or implications or charges against their Christian character have been either implied or expressed, this "United Synod" is organized. And to avoid misapprehensions of our position, we hereby express the wish that Presbyteries, *from every section of the Union*, who adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith as their system of doctrine, and adhere to its Form of Government and Book of Discipline, and who, whatever may be their opinions of slavery as a civil institution, believe that the relation of master and servant should be no bar to membership in the Church of Christ, and that the agitation of the question of slavery, further than pertains to the performance of the duties which the Scriptures state as imposed upon the master and slave, is inappropriate to the functions of the Church, and therefore ought not to be introduced into the Church courts, should unite with our body, and thus aid in the diffusion of the truths of our common Christianity, free from an agitation that has already resulted in the dismemberment of several evangelical Churches.

## OVERTURE FOR UNION WITH THE OLD SCHOOL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

*Adopted by the United Synod in April, 1858.*

WHEREAS, This Synod believe that union between Christian brethren, who adopt the same standards of faith and practice, when it can be effected without compromising vital principles, is always desirable ;

And *whereas*, The sentiment exists among members of our Churches, that a union between this Synod and the Old School General Assembly might be effected upon terms honorable to both parties ;

And *whereas*, The Convention of ministers and laymen held in Richmond, Virginia, in August, 1857, for the purpose of consulting as to the wisest course to be pursued by those who felt aggrieved by the abolition action of the General Assembly at Cleveland, Ohio, in May, 1857, recommended to this Synod, when organized, to appoint a committee to confer with one from the Old School Assembly, (if they should think proper to appoint a committee for the purpose,) with reference to a union of these two branches of the Presbyterian Church ; Therefore

*Resolved*, That a committee of two be appointed to confer with a committee of the Old School Assembly, in the event of that body appointing one for the purpose, with reference to a union of the two bodies.

2. *Resolved*, That Rev. C. H. Read, D.D., and Rev. Mat. M. Marshall be said committee, and that Rev. A. H. H. Boyd, D.D., and Rev. Robt. McLain be the alternates.

3. *Resolved*, That said committee be directed to propose to the committee appointed by the General Assembly the following terms of union, as indispensable to an honorable union on our part :

*First.* We agree to unite as ecclesiastical bodies, by declaring, as this Synod now does, our approval of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and Larger and Shorter Catechisms, as an orthodox and excellent system of Christian doctrine, and also our adherence to the Plan of Worship, Government and Discipline contained in the Westminster Directory.

*Second.* Both bodies agree in declaring it to be a fundamental principle in the Presbyterian Church, that no judicatory of the Church can, *for any cause whatever*, by an act of legislation, constitutionally condemn, or exclude from the Church, other judicatories, or ministers, or private members, without a process of trial, such as is prescribed in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church.

*Third.* Both bodies agree that it is consistent with the requirements of the Westminster Confession of Faith, to receive said Confession according to the adopting act of 1729, to wit : as containing all the essential truths of Christianity, and also the doctrines that distinguish the Calvinistic from the Pelagian, Socinian,

and Arminian systems of theology. We agree, likewise, in believing that this system of doctrine includes the following truths, namely : the Trinity, the Incarnation and Deity of Christ, the Fall and Original Sin, Atonement, Justification by Faith, Personal Election, Effectual Calling, Perseverance of the Saints, the Eternal Happiness of the Righteous, and Eternal Punishment of the Wicked.

*Fourth.* Both bodies agree in declaring that slaveholding, or the relation of master and slave, cannot, *in any case*, be a bar to membership in the Church of Christ. And whilst they admit the right of the judicatories of the Church to take cognizance, in the way prescribed in the Constitution, of cruelties practiced in the relation, they hereby declare the opinion that, as the continuance or abolition of the system of slavery in this country belongs exclusively to the State, the discussion or agitation of slavery, further than pertains to the moral and religious duties arising from the relation, is inappropriate to the functions of Church judicatories.

*Fifth.* It is further agreed that in effecting the Union, the Presbyteries connected with this Synod shall be united as Presbyteries, and without an examination of their ministers, with the Synods belonging to the General Assembly, to which, because of their geographical limits, they should be attached, excepting that the Synod of Tennessee, and the North Alabama Presbytery shall retain their name and occupy their present territory.

*Sixth.* In the event of the General Assembly agreeing to the above terms, the Committee of Synod are directed to communicate the fact to the Presbyteries in connection with this Synod, and the Presbyteries are hereby requested by the United Synod to take action upon the terms of union agreed upon by the Committee of Synod and the General Assembly, and to send a copy of their minute to the United Synod, that will meet in Lynchburg on the third Thursday in May, 1859.

*Seventh.* The committee appointed by this Synod to confer with a committee of the General Assembly, are hereby directed to attend the meeting of the Assembly in New Orleans in May next, and present the preamble and first two resolutions adopted by this Synod, as their authority for requesting a conference with a committee appointed by the General Assembly, to the General Assembly which will then be in session in that city. And if no member of the committee should be able to attend the meeting of the Assembly in New Orleans, they are directed to send a copy of the preamble and first two resolutions to the Moderator of the Assembly, and request that body, if they should think proper, to appoint a committee for the purpose above specified, to designate a time immediately after the adjournment of the Assembly for a conference of the committees. The committee of this Synod are requested, in the event of a conference being had with a committee of the Old School Assembly, to publish, as soon as practicable, the result of their consultations.

The following additional article was submitted and passed :

*Eighth.* That in the event no union is agreed to, the committee be directed to propose to the General Assembly, the establishment of a mutual correspondence in the future between us, as ecclesiastical bodies.

## DELIVERANCE OF THE OLD SCHOOL GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN REPLY TO THE FOREGOING OVERTURE.

*Extract from the Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, in session at New Orleans, May 14, 1858.*

In the matter of the proposals made to this General Assembly on behalf of the "United Synod of the Presbyterian Church," lately constituted in the State of Tennessee out of a portion of those New School Presbyterians, residing in several of the Southern States, who have seceded from that denomination at and after their General Assembly of 1857, this General Assembly makes the following deliverance:

1. The Committee appointed by the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church has communicated to this Assembly the official action of the said Synod, settling on their part the "Terms of Union, deemed by them to be indispensable," and the Assembly is informed through the public press of the contents of a paper adopted by that Synod, and called "*A Declaration of Principles.*" In the judgment of this Assembly, those official papers do not afford a basis of conference upon which this Assembly is able to see that there is any prospect of advancing the interests of Christ's kingdom in general, or those of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, or those of the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church, in particular.

2. The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America has always received frankly and in Christian love, all churches, office-bearers, and private persons of all denominations, making application for admission into her communion, upon the single condition that they were like-minded with herself. At this time ample provision is made, in her existing acts and ordinances, for the reception of all such into her communion, upon terms and by methods precisely equivalent, and, where it is possible, identical, with those provided with regard to her own children, reared in her own bosom. Seeing that it was in a voluntary secession from the Presbyterian Church that the present difficulties of the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church had their origin, and that the door has always been open, for the orderly return of such of those who left us as were like-minded with us; it can hardly be unexpected that we decline any official conference, based on terms which appear to us to involve a condemnation of ourselves, and a renunciation of the rich and peculiar favor of God upon us, in the very matters which led to their secession from our Church, twenty years ago.

3. With reference to the recent schism in the New School Presbyterian body, this General Assembly does not see in that event, or in anything which has hitherto resulted from it, any call of Providence for the Presbyterian Church to take any new step whatever, either with the view of union, or that of closer intercourse than now exists with either of the parts into which that body is now divided. The subjects upon which the whole New School body differed from us at the period of their separation from us, and the subjects upon which the two very unequal portions of that body have recently separated from each other, are questions upon which we as a denomination are at peace, and with regard to the whole of which we see no occasion to revise the constant and unalterable faith of our Church, or to enter into fruitless conferences.

Ordered that a copy of this Minute, duly certified by the Moderator, be communicated to the Stated Clerk or the Committee of the United Synod.

W. A. SCOTT,  
*Moderator.*

NEW ORLEANS, LA., May 14th, 1858.

